

## The Polemical Works of 'Alī al-Ṭabarī

# History of Christian-Muslim Relations

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# The Polemical Works of ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī

*Edited by*

Rifaat Ebied  
David Thomas



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Cover illustration: This shows the minaret of the Great Mosque of Sāmarrā', Iraq. Commissioned by the Caliph al-Mutawakkil soon after his accession in 847, it was completed by 851, at about the time 'Alī al-Ṭabarī was converting to Islam. As a member of the caliph's court, 'Alī may well have worshipped in it during the last years of his life. (<http://www.istockphoto.com/photo/spiral-minaret-9765701#!/spiral-minaret-9765701?st=d109717>)

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## Preface

This book has taken longer to produce than either of us could have anticipated. Being located on either side of the world in Birmingham and Sydney, meeting only a few times a year, and being diverted by other academic activities as well as simply trying to get on with life, have all meant that it has taken almost a decade for us to finish. We hope that the fruit of our efforts will be thought worthy of the nurturing and cultivating that have been given to it—it is certainly ripe enough by now.

We acknowledge with gratitude the assistance we have received from the staffs of the John Rylands University Library, Manchester, the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, and the Egyptian National Library, Cairo, in supplying photocopies of the manuscripts edited and translated here, and for responding to queries. In addition, we happily thank a number of scholars who have helped us at various stages. Prominent among these are Professor Lejla Demiri, University of Tübingen, who secured a copy of the unique manuscript of the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Professor Sabine Schmidtke, Princeton University, New Jersey, who read and commented on parts of the Introduction, and above all Mr Khalid Muhammad ‘Abduh, Cairo, who when he heard that we were working on ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī’s polemical works provided us with a copy of the late manuscript of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* in the Egyptian National Library, and shared with us his own researches on the author and the editions of the two works he had made. This was a great help, and an immense gesture of generosity. Needless to say, neither he nor anyone other than the two of us is responsible for mistakes in what we have completed.

In the course of our work, we have consulted together periodically in order to agree readings in the Arabic texts and translations in the English text. We happily thank the British Academy, the University of Birmingham and the University of Sydney for the financial support they have given to enable us to do this.





# ‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī, Fragments of a Life

The two works presented here are among the most significant examples of Muslim responses to Christianity. They comprise one of the earliest surviving Muslim analyses of the contradictions in Christian theology and also one of the earliest known apologies for the prophetic status of Muḥammad. Written in the mid-ninth century by the convert from Christianity ‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī, they reflect discussions in one of the most intensive periods of exchange between Christians and Muslims, and they give an unrivalled depiction of the attitude of a leading intellectual and public figure in ‘Abbasid society towards his new faith and the one he had left.

The works have been known in published form for many years, the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, the earlier of the two, since it was edited in 1959 by I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch<sup>1</sup> and translated into French in 1995 by Jean-Marie Gaudeul,<sup>2</sup> and the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* since it was translated in 1922 and edited in 1923 by Alphonse Mingana.<sup>3</sup> However, scholarship has moved on, new information has come to light, and it is time to look at the works afresh, not least because defects in the editions of both and controversies surrounding the date and authorship of the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* have hampered proper study of them, and have meant that neither work has been accorded its due status or placed properly within its intellectual and religious context. The editions and translations presented here, which are based on close examination of all the manuscripts of the works, including a hitherto unknown copy of the *Dīn wa-dawla*, and also quotations from this work in later authors that have been identified comparatively recently, are intended to remedy this lack and to make possible the study and appreciation of what are unusually well-informed and often ingenious arguments from a singular mind possessing knowledge and experience that were almost unique among Muslim authors of his or virtually any other time.

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1 I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch, ‘Ar-Radd ‘alā-n-Naṣārā de ‘Alī aṭ-Ṭabarī’, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint Joseph* 36 (1959) 113–148.

2 J.-M. Gaudeul, *Riposte aux Chrétiens par ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī*, Rome, 1995.

3 A. Mingana, *The Book of religion and empire*, Manchester, 1922; *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, Manchester, 1923.

### ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī: The Early Records

As his last name indicates, ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī came from Ṭabaristān, the region south of the Caspian Sea from where the great historian and exegete Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (839–923) also originated. ‘Alī was born a Christian, as he himself relates, the son of a scholar whose Syriac-speaking contemporaries acknowledged as a leader among them by giving him the title *rabbān*, ‘our master’. As part of ‘Alī’s name, this title has caused confusion from early times down to the present.

Outside ‘Alī’s own works<sup>4</sup> the earliest details about his life are given in the tenth century by Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī in his *Ta’rīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*. He calls ‘Alī simply ‘Alī ibn Rabbān, the Christian secretary (*al-kātib al-Naṣrānī*), and says he was secretary to Māzyār ibn Qārīn, the governor of Ṭabaristān. In 838–839, after the governor had risen in revolt and the caliph’s forces were closing in, Māzyār sent ‘Alī with the deputy commander of his guard to exact ransom from townspeople whom he was holding captive,<sup>5</sup> and a year later, when Māzyār’s cause was lost, he gave ‘Alī and four other close followers permission to return to their homes in order to protect their possessions against the encroaching army.<sup>6</sup> From all this it seems clear that although he was a Christian (Abū Ja‘far shows no awareness of any conversion), ‘Alī was a senior member of the Muslim governor’s administration and a trusted supporter. It also suggests that he had reached maturity by the time Māzyār entrusted him with a delicate and difficult operation.

Later in the tenth century, Ibn al-Nadīm gives fuller personal information about ‘Alī in the *Fihrist*. He names him as ‘Alī ibn Rabal or Zayn Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Sahl al-Ṭabarī, and says he was secretary to Māzyār. He converted to Islam at the prompting of the Caliph al-Mu‘taṣim (r. 833–842) and came to court, where the Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861) later made him a table companion (*nadīm*). Among his medical works, the best known is his *Firdaws al-ḥikma*.<sup>7</sup> The forms ‘Rabal’ or ‘Zayn’ can be read as the result of efforts to understand the Syriac ‘Rabbān’, while the comment about ‘Alī’s intimacy with two ‘Abbasid rulers suggests that his bureaucratic and possibly medical talents were recognised at the highest levels, though his conversion as early as 842 presents problems, as will be discussed below.

4 For the earliest biographical notices, see Mingana, *Religion and empire*, pp. xi–xiii.

5 Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, series 3, vol. 2, ed. S. Guyard and M.J. de Goeje, Leiden, 1881, pp. 1276–1277.

6 Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, pp. 1283–1284. There is a further reference on p. 1293.

7 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. M. Riḍā-Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971, p. 354.

In the twelfth century, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Abī l-Qāsim ibn Zayd al-Bayhaqī (d. 1170) mentions ‘Alī briefly in his *Tatimma šiwān al-ḥikma*, where he confuses details about him and his father. Evidently referring to Sahl al-Ṭabarī, al-Bayhaqī says that he was a scribe of the city of Merv, who possessed lofty ambitions and knowledge of the Gospel and medicine, and that the meaning of *rabbān* is ‘great teacher’. His son was an expert physician, as is attested by his *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, which was one of his many works, most of them on medicine.<sup>8</sup> Al-Bayhaqī says nothing about ‘Alī’s years in the service of Māzyār and the caliphs or about his conversion, though he implicitly identifies his Christian origins.

Some decades after this, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Isfandiyār gives a few scant details in his history of Ṭabaristān, which he wrote in 1216. He places ‘Alī among the men of the region who were known as writers and scribes, and says that he was at first secretary to Māzyār ibn Qārīn and later to the Caliph al-Mu‘taṣim. He remembers ‘Alī for his originality and eloquence, and for his two medical works, *Firdaws al-ḥikma* and *Baḥr al-fawā’id*.<sup>9</sup> Ibn Isfandiyār seems unaware of any conversion, though in another place he confirms ‘Alī’s links with both Māzyār and the ‘Abbasid caliphate when he reports that the caliph appointed ‘Alī (he gives his name as ‘Alī ibn Zayn in the same mistaken way as others who could not make sense of the title *rabbān*) to the position previously held by Māzyār ‘in the foreign office’. He adds the valuable note that when ‘Alī was informed that his despatches were less rich in meaning than Māzyār’s, he explained that Māzyār had been writing in his own language whereas he himself was having to translate into Arabic.<sup>10</sup> What Ibn Isfandiyār means by ‘Alī replacing Māzyār is not entirely clear, though it is likely to be connected with the time Māzyār had spent close to the Caliph al-Ma’mūn some twenty years earlier, when he had been made to convert to Islam.<sup>11</sup>

At about the same time as this, the geographer and historian Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1179–1229) in his *Muḥjam al-buldān* says simply that ‘Alī, whom he again mistakenly names as ‘Alī ibn Zayn al-Ṭabarī, was secretary to Māzyār and was learned in many subjects, especially medicine.<sup>12</sup>

8 Al-Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh al-ḥukamā’, ya’nī tarjuma-i Tatimma Šiwān al-ḥikma*, ed. Muḥammad Shafī’, Lahore, 1935, Arabic text, p. 9. Some of these details recall what ‘Alī himself says at the beginning of the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*.

9 *An abridged translation of the History of Ṭabaristān by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Isfandiyār*, trans. E.G. Browne, Leiden, 1905, p. 80.

10 *History of Ṭabaristān*, p. 43.

11 M. Rekaya, art. ‘Kārinids’, *El2*.

12 Yāqūt, *Muḥjam al-buldān*, ed. Farīd ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jundī, Beirut, 1990, vol. 2, p. 542, col. 1.

Ibn al-Qiftī (1172–1248) in his *Ta’rīkh al-ḥukamā’* names ‘Alī as Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī and identifies him as a specialist in medical knowledge. He links him with the governors of Ṭabaristān and says that after an uprising he went to Rayy, where he taught Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī (854–925 or 935), and adds that he later went to Sāmarrā’, where he wrote his *Firdaws al-ḥikma*. In a further note, for which he acknowledges Ibn al-Nadīm, he explains that ‘Alī’s father was given the title *rabbān* because he was a Jewish rabbi (*kāna rabīn al-Yahūd*), and that ‘Alī became a Muslim under the influence of al-Mu‘taṣim and was close to both this caliph and al-Mutawakkil.<sup>13</sup> The reference to ‘Alī’s father’s Jewish roots does not appear in the extant text of Ibn al-Nadīm, and one wonders whether Ibn al-Qiftī made this link himself in the same way he links ‘Alī with Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, on the supposition that it seemed a likely possibility.

A few decades after this, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a (c. 1194–1270) in his *Uyūn al-anbā’ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’* repeats the report that ‘Alī was secretary to Māzyār ibn Qārīn, that he converted to Islam under al-Mu‘taṣim and was made one of al-Mutawakkil’s table companions, and that he was the teacher of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī in medicine. Immediately before this, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a says that ‘Alī’s father (the text reads *wa-kāna wālīduhu ‘Alī ibn Rabban*, but this must be a mistake for *waladuhu*) Rabban al-Ṭabarī was a Jew, a doctor and an astrologer, expert in medicine, engineering, mathematics and translation of philosophical works. He was named *rabbān* because of his expertise in Jewish law, and he made a translation of Ptolemy’s *Almagest*.<sup>14</sup> The title *rabbān* has evidently misled both Ibn al-Qiftī and Ibn Uṣaybi‘a into thinking ‘Alī’s father was not a Christian, though the stress they lay on his knowledge of science and philosophy supports what ‘Alī himself says about him in the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*.

Finally, Ibn Khallikān (1211–1282) in his *Wafayāt al-a’yān wa-anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān* repeats the point that ‘Alī was the teacher of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, identifies him as the author of well-known medical works, and says that he converted from Christianity to Islam.<sup>15</sup> This is the first mention of a conversion from Christianity.

This sequence of rather meagre and progressively repetitive notes suggests that for all his reputation as a medical expert ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī was not well known personally, though it was generally accepted that he worked first in the service

13 Ibn al-Qiftī, *Ta’rīkh al-ḥukamā’*, ed. J. Lippert, Leipzig, 1903, p. 231.

14 Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a, *Uyūn al-anbā’ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’*, ed. M. Bāsil ‘Uyūn al-Sūd, Beirut, 1998, pp. 379, 378.

15 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān wa-anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān*, ed. I. ‘Abbās, Beirut, 1977, vol. 5, p. 159.

of Māzyār ibn Qārin in Ṭabaristān and later for the caliphs al-Mu‘taṣim and his successors in Sāmarrā’, under whom he converted from his original faith to Islam. He appears to have been active mainly in the period between about 835, when he achieved some standing under Māzyār, and about 860, when he was among the close companions of al-Mutawakkil. Some of the biographers repeatedly mistake the second Syriac element of his name for Zayn or similar, and from Ibn al-Qifṭī onwards they often interpret this element as a Jewish title, and impute Jewish ancestry to him.

These details given by ‘Alī’s biographers are supplemented and corrected by references in ‘Alī’s own surviving works. At the beginning of the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, the medical work for which he was best known, he says, with a hint of pride in his words, that his father was a scholar in Merv, a man dedicated to piety but even more to science, and ‘showed more interest in (*kāna yuqaddimu*) medicine than in the occupation of his ancestors’. It was for this reason that he was given the title *rabbān*, ‘our master’. ‘Alī explains that the meaning of this term ‘is “great among us” and “learned among us”’.<sup>16</sup> This important note makes clear that the element in ‘Alī’s name that is mistakenly rendered Zayn, Zayl and so on by the Muslim authors who mention him is in fact his father Sahl’s title, a Syriac term that, though it resembles the Hebrew ‘rabbi’, was given by Christians to distinguished scholars.<sup>17</sup> The distortions in the various biographical notices, as well as in manuscripts of ‘Alī’s works, show that it was systematically misunderstood and that the undotted skeletal forms of the letters were adapted to more familiar Arabic names. It was clearly used by Ibn al-Qifṭī and others to create the tradition that ‘Alī came from Jewish ancestry. This misrepresentation continues to the present,<sup>18</sup> though the earliest notices contain no hint to support it. On the contrary, their references to ‘Alī converting to Islam from Christianity, as well as the evidence of his own anti-Christian works, convincingly deny it.

Other details in the *Firdaws al-ḥikma* confirm some of the points about ‘Alī’s life and period of activity that were remembered by later authors. At the beginning, he says that he finished the work in Sāmarrā’ in the third year

16 ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī, *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, ed. M.Z. Siddiqui, Berlin, 1928, p. 1.

17 C. Adang, *Muslim writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, from Ibn Rabbān to Ibn Hazm*, Leiden, 1996, p. 24, n. 3, mentions a reference found only in the Berlin manuscript of the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, where ‘Alī alludes to his father’s interest in Hebrew language.

18 E.g. M. Rosen, art. ‘Alī ibn Sahl ibn Rabbān al-Ṭabarī’, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd edition, 2007, Jerusalem, vol. 1, pp. 659–660; J. Al-Khalili, *Pathfinders, the golden age of Arabic science*, London, 2010, pp. 45, 144. Here the biographical details have become irretrievably tangled.

of al-Mutawakkil's reign,<sup>19</sup> which would be about 850, and that he originally wrote it in Arabic and afterwards translated it into Syriac.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, in Chapter 312, entitled 'On signs in the air pointing to coming events', he refers to occurrences towards the end of the reign of the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim (d. 842) that presaged the death of his successor al-Wāthiq (r. 842–847), whom 'Alī calls by his personal name Hārūn,<sup>21</sup> and in many places he quotes from the East Syrian Christian medical experts Yaḥyā ibn Māsawayh (d. 857) and Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq (809–873), the latter of whom was celebrated for his Arabic translations of Greek scientific texts for the Caliphs al-Ma'mūn (r. 813–833), al-Mu'taṣim, al-Wāthiq and al-Mutawakkil. Since Ḥunayn was the latter's personal physician, it is entirely likely that he and 'Alī were well acquainted, especially since they almost certainly came from the same Christian denomination. However, although 'Alī makes clear that he respected Ḥunayn's medical expertise, the two may not have been close, since at this time 'Alī was in all likelihood warming to Islam, while Ḥunayn was resisting invitations to convert. His correspondence from about this time with one of the Munajjim family, probably 'Alī ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Munajjim,<sup>22</sup> who like 'Alī was a table companion of al-Mutawakkil, has been preserved, and it shows that he took a very disdainful attitude towards the other faith, as will be seen below.

These details indicate that 'Alī was active in the 'Abbasid court in the decades around the middle of the ninth century; the caliphs for whom he worked and the figures whom he knew all date from about this time. It is maybe not coincidental that in the *Firdaws* he refers to al-Mutawakkil by the un-Islamic title of 'the greatest king' (*al-malik al-a'ẓam*), and that while he accords him his full formal dignity of al-'Adl al-Mu'ayyad al-Wahhāb Ja'far al-Imām al-Mutawakkil 'alā Allāh, Amīr al-Mu'minīn,<sup>23</sup> there is none of the lavish praise that is found in the *Dīn wa-dawla*, where, writing as a Muslim, each time he mentions the caliph he thanks him excessively for the help and support the caliph has given him.<sup>24</sup> This distant form of reference in the *Firdaws* allows the possibility that he had not yet become a Muslim by the time he had finished

19 *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 2.

20 *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 8.

21 *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 519. On this, see M. Meyerhof, "Alī aṭ-Ṭabarī's "Paradise of wisdom", one of the oldest Arabic compendiums of medicine", *Isis* 16 (1931) 6–54, pp. 8–9, 40–41.

22 See D. Thomas, B. Roggema et al. (eds), *Christian-Muslim relations, a bibliographical history volume 1 (600–900)*, Leiden, 2009, pp. 762–767, for arguments in favour of this member of the Banū Munajjim as the author of this invitation.

23 *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 2 lines 20, 23–24.

24 See below, pp. 204–207, 470–471, 472–473.

the work, although it must be acknowledged that when he says that God permitted him to complete it, *adhina Allāh ta‘ālā fī itmāmihi*,<sup>25</sup> his language is recognisably Islamic. Stronger evidence, although again not conclusive, is that while he quotes copiously from the Bible he does not quote from the Qur’ān. This would seem to suggest that even though he had worked in a Muslim environment for years, first in the court of the convert Māzyār ibn Qārin and then in the court of the caliphs, he was not familiar enough with the Qur’ān to use it as freely as Christian scripture, or interested enough in it to refer to it as an authority or support.

Further personal details appear in the two works that ‘Alī wrote after he had converted. In the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* (referred to twice in the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, and hence the earlier of the two), which he composed ‘as a renunciation of Christianity’ (*li-l-tanaṣṣul min dīn al-Naṣrāniyya*), and therefore not long after his conversion, he says that he was a Christian until the age of 70.<sup>26</sup> In the body of the work, he goes on to give an impressive demonstration of first-hand knowledge about the inconsistencies between the Nicene Creed and the Gospels that attests to close studies in his ancestral faith and what must have been long reflection, stretching back through the years before his conversion, on the relationship between its scriptural basis and the churches’ principal summary of beliefs. He presumably did not arrive at the judgement that these two authorities were discordant in the relatively short time between his conversion and writing his refutation, but must have developed his views on them over a longer period. It is not impossible that by employing the forensically detached methods that his medical experience had given him, and in the close presence of Muslims who continually probed his religious stance in the years he worked at the caliphal court, he had grown increasingly distanced from the received explanations of Christian beliefs as time went by, and open to moving onto other ground.

It is not unlikely that the latter parts of the *Radd* contained further details about the circumstances in which ‘Alī wrote it, though these, together with the arguments contained in them, have largely been lost.

The date that ‘Alī gives for his conversion appears to be quite straightforward: he was a Christian ‘all my life until I reached the age of seventy’ (*min awwal ‘umrī ilā an balaghtu min al-‘umr sab‘īn*).<sup>27</sup> But since the number 70 was among those that throughout the ancient and medieval world were more

25 *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 2.22.

26 See below, pp. 62–63.

27 In earlier accounts of ‘Alī, Thomas has taken this reference as a firm indication of his age. This no longer seems advisable.

often intended symbolically than chronologically, this piece of information cannot simply be taken at face value. As the tenth-century polymath al-Mas'ūdī remarks, citing Hippocrates as authority: 'Everything in this world is necessarily determined according to seven: hence, there are seven planets, seven climes, seven days, and seven stages in the life of man',<sup>28</sup> while, as Lawrence Conrad shows on the basis of early Islamic traditions, to reach the age of 70 was regarded as a sign of God's particular blessing: 'It enormously enhanced the prestige of an elderly individual even to approach the age of seventy, and to surpass it made one a focus of considerable public attention'.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the figure 'Alī gives may be no more than an estimate of his actual age, and could even be exaggerated in order to convey the impression that God had especially preserved his life until he could become aware of the truth and convert to Islam. Even so, it is worth remembering that this figure is not given by a later biographer as an enhancement to the reputation of an earlier authority, but by 'Alī himself writing for readers who would know him personally. So it is unlikely to be wildly inaccurate. In fact, it can be taken as the estimate of a medical specialist who knew he was in the seventh stage of life, and hence as an indication that he had passed the age of 60 and was approaching 70.

In the course of the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* 'Alī gives a few details about Christian beliefs that point to the likelihood that he himself had been a Nestorian.<sup>30</sup> He points out that the Jacobites alone called Mary 'bearer of God' (*wālidat Allāh*),<sup>31</sup> a title that Nestorians emphatically rejected, and in his translation of the Creed he includes the specifically Nestorian belief that Christ was 'first-born of all creatures' (*bikr al-khalā'iq*).<sup>32</sup> These details, minor as they are, impart a particular denominational hue to 'Alī's Christian beliefs.

'Alī explains that he wrote the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* as both a renunciation of Christianity and 'a justification and advice to all Christians' (*al-īdhār wa-l-naṣiḥa li-l-Naṣārā kaḥḥatan*). Some years later, when he came to write the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, he looks back on his former faith as evident delusion, and he praises God because 'he has removed the veil, he has opened the locks, he has

28 Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. C. Pellat, Beirut, 1966–1979, vol. 2, p. 374, cited in L. Conrad, 'Seven and the *tasbī'*: on the implications of numerical symbolism for the study of medieval Islamic history', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 31 (1988) 42–73, p. 49.

29 Conrad, 'Seven and the *tasbī'*', p. 62.

30 See on this S.K. Samir, 'La réponse d'al-Ṣafī ibn al-'Assāl à la refutation des chrétiens de 'Alī al-Ṭabarī', *Parole de l'Orient* 11 (1983) 281–328, pp. 284–285.

31 See below, pp. 88–89.

32 See below, pp. 114–115.



made it possible to get out from the darkness of delusion.’<sup>33</sup> He is certain about the step he has taken, and he appears to explain some of the circumstances in which he took it when at the end of the book he thanks God for giving him guidance, and also thanks ‘his Caliph’ al-Mutawakkil for what he has brought him and other client people to by diverse means of warning and enticing.<sup>34</sup> This sounds very much an acknowledgement of the caliph as instrumental in his conversion. He certainly regards al-Mutawakkil as the instigator of this book, thanking him in a number of places for his help and advice with it.<sup>35</sup>

In the *Dīn wa-dawla* ‘Alī discloses a little about his family when he names his paternal uncle as Abū Zakkār Yahyā ibn al-Nu‘mān, says he was a Christian, and calls him an expert who was acknowledged throughout Iraq and Khurāsān. He also admits that when he himself was still a Christian he used to agree with his uncle’s rejection of the miraculous claims made about the Qur’ān, and recalls that his uncle noted in his work ‘in refutation of the people of the religions’ that no one became a Muslim because of any miracles they had witnessed.<sup>36</sup> This indicates that ‘Alī’s whole family, including his father, must have been Christian and probably belonged to the Nestorians, and that his uncle at least held definite views about the deficiencies of Islam compared with Christianity.

An important detail concerning dating appears towards the end of the chapter on the Prophecy of Daniel in the *Dīn wa-dawla*, where ‘Alī says that from the time of Christ to the year in which he is writing there have been 867 years.<sup>37</sup> While this cannot be reconciled with a time during the reign of al-Mutawakkil, who was assassinated in 861, Mingana suggests that it may be inaccurate by ten years, according to Syrian practice, and that it should be reduced by two further years because of differences in dating between the Western and Syrian calendars. This would give a date of 855 as the year in which the work was completed.<sup>38</sup>

A further point worth noting is that by this time in the mid-850s ‘Alī had completely absorbed Muslim attitudes towards Christianity, with no trace of his former religious sensitivities or ways of thinking. When, for example, he mentions the crucifixion of Christ he is careful to make clear that he does not necessarily accept the accuracy of the Gospel account to which he refers but

33 See below, pp. 230–231.

34 See below, pp. 472–473.

35 See below, pp. 204–207, 470–471, 472–473.

36 See below, pp. 434–435.

37 See below, pp. 422–423.

38 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 138, n. 1.

only that this is what Christians themselves accept: ‘In the Gospel which the Christians possess it is said ...’.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, throughout his commentaries on the biblical books that form a large part of the work, he shows no open awareness of any Christian interpretation of the verses he discusses, but instead treats them as latent evidence for Islam in need of the correct exegesis to bring out their full significance. This is demonstrated maybe most strikingly in his interpretation of Isaiah 40:3–5, which in his translation reads: ‘In the desert a voice cried and said, “Make clear the way for the Lord and make straight the path in the desert for our God; every valley shall be filled with water and they will overflow; the mountains and hills shall be made low; the rises shall become flat, and the rough ground made low and smooth, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and every one shall see him, for the Lord has said this”’.<sup>40</sup> He reads this purely as a prophecy of the early Muslim victories over the Sasanian Persians in the seventh century, even though he must have been fully aware of its prominent application in the Gospels to John the Baptist heralding the coming of Christ (Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4, John 1:23). He appears to have turned away completely from his former faith, in both external doctrinal approach and inner spiritual bearing.

These various references offer intriguing details about ‘Alī, and some of them contradict others. But it is possible to reconstruct the main outlines of his life and to offer a picture of his person by taking what appear to be the more reliable items of information and working from them.

### The Life of ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī

It is certain that ‘Alī was active in the mid-ninth century. His full name was Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Rabbān Sahl al-Ṭabarī, and he came from a Christian family in Ṭabaristān. His father and paternal uncle were both acknowledged scholars, the former so thoroughly knowledgeable and expert in religion, science and philosophy that he was given the title *rabbān*, ‘our master’, and the latter also famous for his learning and remembered by his nephew for pointed views about the Qur’ān and Islam.

‘Alī himself studied medicine and gained recognition for his expertise. But under Māzyār ibn Qārīn, hereditary prince and ‘Abbasid governor of Ṭabaristān, he worked as chiefly secretary rather than physician. Incidentally,

39 See below, pp. 442–443.

40 See below, pp. 362–363.

Māzyār had converted to Islam probably before 823, when he was appointed to his position by the Caliph al-Ma'mūn. He came to look on 'Alī as a trusted supporter, and on at least one occasion sent him on a mission as his representative, suggesting that 'Alī was no inexperienced youth by the time he performed this service. He finally released 'Alī from his employment in about 840, just before he was overthrown and taken captive and executed. According to some accounts 'Alī then went to Rayy, though he must have been in the newly built imperial capital Sāmarrā' soon afterwards, because he was taken into the employment of the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim, who died in 842. From then, he remained at court in the service of the Caliphs al-Wāthiq (842–847) and al-Mutawakkil (847–861), and was honoured by being made table companion to the latter. Throughout all this time, he pursued his calling in medicine, and in 850 he completed the medical work for which he is best known, *Firdaws al-hikma*, 'The paradise of wisdom'.

At some stage in his time in Sāmarrā', presumably well after his father and uncle had died, he converted from Christianity to Islam, and then wrote the two works for which he is remembered in Christian-Muslim debates. Here a problem arises, because if, as Ibn al-Nadīm and other biographers say, he converted to Islam under al-Mu'taṣim before 842, and he was between 60 and 70 by this time, as he says in the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, he would have been well advanced in age when he served under the caliph's successors, and extremely old by the time he came to write the *Dīn wa-dawla*, which he clearly says he composed during the reign of al-Mutawakkil, and was probably working on sometime around 855. While it is not impossible that he should have still been actively engaged in writing polemics at the age of about 75, which is according to the most generous estimate (this is on the assumption that he was only about 60 in 842), it is maybe worth looking for an alternative explanation.

The basis of this is admittedly small, though the cumulative evidence is persuasive. The first item is 'Alī's reference to the Caliph al-Mutawakkil at the end of the *Dīn wa-dawla*, where he says:

Thanks are due to God for the way he has guided me, and to his servant and caliph Ja'far al-Mutawakkil 'alā Allāh, Commander of the Faithful (may God prolong his life), for what he has firmly brought me to, and has drawn me and others of the protected people to by his attracting and alarming, his esteeming and appreciating all people together.<sup>41</sup>

41 See below, pp. 472–473.

The most natural reading of these words is that God has guided ‘Alī to true faith by means of this caliph’s endeavours in arguing the case for Islam and warning about the alternatives. The phrase, ‘has drawn me and others of the protected people to’ (*wa-ajtarraṇī wa-ghayrī min ahl al-dhimma ilayhi*) is particularly telling, because it points to a time in the recent past when ‘Alī was still a *dhimmī*, until he heeded al-Mutawakkil’s promises and warnings.

The second item is the two references in the *Dīn wa-dawla* to the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, which both seem to imply that the earlier work does not precede the later by very long. The first is:

We have already shown above and in my book on *The Refutation of the groups of Christians* that the term ‘God’ and the term ‘Lord’ can both apply to humans as well.<sup>42</sup>

It is as though ‘Alī is re-using an argument from a work he has written in the recent past. The second is:

Let him who has ears hear my argument and advice, and consider these testimonies and comparisons, and let him apply himself to this book of mine and to the *Book of the Refutation of the Christians*, and let him seek guidance from God and work for the release of his soul before its destruction sets in on him.<sup>43</sup>

Here he mentions his two works against Christianity as though he regards them as a complementary pair, and therefore written close to each other. But if he was working on the *Dīn wa-dawla* in al-Mutawakkil’s reign and probably in 855, and he wrote the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* soon after his conversion, this event must have taken place only recently, and is very unlikely to have occurred a good 13 years earlier before al-Mu‘taṣim died in 842.

The third item is a number of features of the *Firdaws al-ḥikma* that have been described above, though all admittedly negative. Firstly, ‘Alī talks there of his father with pride and without any hint of him being wrong in his faith. Secondly, he refers to al-Mutawakkil with respect but without the warmth of the *Dīn wa-dawla*. And thirdly, he is content to use the Bible to support and illustrate his points but does not use the Qur’ān in this way. If these silences

<sup>42</sup> See below, pp. 362–363.

<sup>43</sup> See below, pp. 374–375.

amount to anything, they point to an individual who was neither familiar with Islam nor enthused by it. And this was in 850.

Although it is difficult to be certain in the absence of hard evidence of any substantial kind, such facts as exist point towards a conversion under al-Mutawakkil soon after 850, and the composition of the two polemical works between then and about 855.<sup>44</sup> If this is what happened, it becomes possible to set out the following train of events. Taking ‘Alī’s statement at the beginning of the *Radd* about his age as having some degree of accuracy, and therefore making him 60 or slightly older when he converted in the early 850s, he would have been born in about 790, and would have been in his early 50s when he left the service of Māzyār ibn Qārīn and first came to the caliph’s notice. It also means that in all likelihood he would have died between 860 and 870, when he would have been between 70 and 80.<sup>45</sup>

This account of ‘Alī’s life makes sense according to many details in his own works, as has been shown above. But it conflicts with several points made by his later biographers. It means that Ibn al-Nadīm must have been wrong in dating his conversion to the time of al-Mu‘taṣim, and suggests that without firm knowledge he made the assumption that ‘Alī would have converted as soon as he came into the caliph’s service. It also means that Ibn al-Qifṭī had no definite knowledge on which to base his connection between ‘Alī and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī. The latter was born in 864, and so could not have begun his studies until 874 at the very earliest. By this time, ‘Alī would have been in his dotage, if not dead, and certainly well beyond teaching. It has to be assumed that the biographer saw a possible link between two renowned physicians from roughly the same period and turned this into a definite relationship.

This dating does, however, accord with the accounts that make ‘Alī the teacher of Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, who was born in 839, and could thus have studied under his fellow countryman when he was a teenager and before the

44 Support for this contention is given by the Egyptian jurist Abū l-Baqā’ Šāliḥ ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ja‘farī (d. 1270), who is quoted by the Copt Ibn al-‘Assāl as remarking (either in his *Takhjīl man ḥarrafa al-Tawrah wa-l-Injīl* or in one of the abridgements he later made of it) that ‘Alī ‘converted to Islam through the efforts of al-Mutawakkil’ (*fa-aslama ‘alā yadd al-Mutawakkil*); see Samir, ‘Réponse’, p. 287.

45 Based on the information ‘Alī gives in the *Radd* about his age at conversion, Samir, ‘Réponse’, p. 288, gives the following dating: birth in 785–790, conversion in 854–859, slightly later than the suggestion above, and death soon afterwards. He makes the point (p. 287) that ‘Alī would have given his age in lunar years, though it is by no means certain that a scientist, so soon after he abandoned the faith in which this calendar would not have been used, would have done this.

latter's death. Although Abū Ja‘far does not make any remarks that indicate he remembered ‘Alī in any special way when he refers to him in his *Ta’rīkh*, Yāqūt recalls that he possessed a copy of the *Firdaws al-ḥikma* that he had taken down from ‘Alī's own dictation.<sup>46</sup>

By the standards of his day, ‘Alī was not a prolific writer. In addition to the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* and the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, which are all extant in either complete or partial form,<sup>47</sup> nine other titles are recorded by the biographers. These are: *Kitāb tuḥfat al-mulūk*, *Kitāb kunnāsh al-ḥaḍra*, *Kitāb manāfi‘ al-a‘īma wa-l-ashriba wa-l-‘aqāqir*,<sup>48</sup> *Kitāb irfāq al-ḥayāt*, *Kitāb ḥifẓ al-ṣiḥḥa*, *Kitāb fī l-ruqan*, *Kitāb fī l-ḥijāma*, *Kitāb fī tartīb al-aghdhiya*,<sup>49</sup> *Baḥr al-fawā'id*,<sup>50</sup> *Kitāb al-iḍāḥ min al-siman wa-l-huzāl wa-tahayyuj al-bāh wa-ibṭālihi wa-jāmi‘ funūnihi*.<sup>51</sup> Some of these may be alternative titles for the same work, in particular *Kunnāsh al-ḥaḍra* for *Firdaws al-ḥikma*. Most, and probably all, were on topics to do with the preservation of health or cure of illness. They give the clear impression that ‘Alī turned to religious topics only after his conversion, and suggest that although it was against his inclinations and training he did this because he was either forced to defend himself or felt an inner prompting to do so.

Being active in the first half of the ninth century and at court from the early 840s, ‘Alī would have been at the centre of ‘Abbasid cultural and intellectual life in one of its most exciting and, under al-Mutawakkil, tumultuous periods. He could have met leading theological thinkers, particularly among the Mu‘tazila, and would have witnessed at first hand the implementation of the *miḥna* under al-Mu‘taṣim and al-Wāthiq, the successors of al-Ma‘mūn, when, in accordance

46 Yāqūt, *Irshād al-arīb ilā ma‘rifat al-adīb*, ed. D.S. Margoliouth, vol. 6, London, 1931, p. 460, and cf. p. 429.

47 The single MS containing the *Radd* breaks off in mid-sentence.

48 These are in Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 354.

49 Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a, *Uyūn*, p. 379. *Kitāb ḥifẓ al-ṣiḥḥa* is extant in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library—Marsh 413. Incidental features at the beginning, such as a reference to *al-anbiyā’ al-muṣṭafūn* (f. 2<sup>v</sup>) and the blessing upon the Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, *raḍīya Allāh ‘anhu* (f. 3<sup>v</sup>), hint that the work was written by a Muslim, while the reference to a caliph as its inspiration clinches this: *wa-qad da‘ānī ṣidq al-ḥibba li-sayyidi wa-mawlā’i amīr al-mu‘minīn, aṭāla Allāh baqāhu, ilā l-ijtihād fī shukrihi* (f. 2<sup>v</sup>). Sadly, this caliph is not named, so no new information is provided by the work on matters of dating. In accordance with the arguments given in this chapter, it fits into ‘Alī's post-conversion period, and would therefore appear to be written for the Caliph al-Mutawakkil sometime in the early 850s. Further study may show that it is an abridgement of *Firdaws al-ḥikma*.

50 *History of Ṭabaristān*, p. 80.

51 Cited in *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 113.

with Mu‘tazilī dogma about the uniqueness of God, anyone entering public office was required to affirm that the Qur’ān was not God’s eternal utterance but created by God. He could easily have met Abū ‘Uthmān al-Jāhiz (d. 869), who was prominent in Baghdad life and intimate with leading politicians, Abū l-Hudhayl, who had moved from his native Baṣra to Baghdad in 818, or any of the other Mu‘tazila, and it is not at all unlikely that he knew the philosopher Abū Yūsuf al-Kindī (d. c. 866), a sympathiser of Mu‘tazilī ideas, because al-Kindī was tutor to al-Mu‘taṣim’s son and presumably continued to appear at court until he lost favour under al-Mutawakkil, when he had his library temporarily confiscated.

Someone whom ‘Alī almost certainly knew personally was al-Faḍl ibn Marwān ibn Māsarij, a powerful Christian presence at court when he was vizier under al-Mu‘taṣim from 833 to 836, and an influential adviser on fiscal policy to later caliphs, though the two may not have been close because, as Ibn al-Nadīm comments, Faḍl devoted himself to the caliphal service at the expense of scholarly pursuits.<sup>52</sup> He also very likely knew the translator and scientist Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, whose opinions in medical matters he quotes in the *Firdaws al-ḥikma*. Ḥunayn appeared at court on a regular basis, and since he was a fellow Christian and had similar scientific interests to ‘Alī, they may have sought each other out. As physician to al-Mutawakkil, Ḥunayn must have been a close witness to ‘Alī’s conversion, and he may even have known the reasons that led ‘Alī to this dramatic step.<sup>53</sup>

Some idea of the religious pressures on Christians in positions such as those ‘Alī and Ḥunayn held is afforded by a correspondence that took place between Ḥunayn himself and the close companion (*nadīm*) of al-Mutawakkil and his successors, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Munajjim, a member of an elite Baghdad family that had been close to successive rulers from the beginning of

52 Ibn Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 141. If, as Bénédicte Landron says (‘Les relations originelles entre Chrétiens de l’est (Nestoriens) et Musulmans’, *Parole de l’Orient* 10 (1981–1982) 191–222, p. 222), this figure must have converted to Islam in order to be able to occupy such a senior position, the possibility is raised of a source of influence and pressure on ‘Alī to take the same step.

53 It is understandable why Max Meyerhoff should make the suggestion that the unnamed scholar who Ḥunayn says urged him to finish his book of treatises on the eye may have been ‘Alī himself (*The book of ten treatises on the eye ascribed to Hunain ibn Is-haq (809–877 AD)*, Cairo, 1928, pp. 194–195/trans. 127–128; for this suggestion, see pp. xxxi–xxxii, xxxix, xlv), though as Meyerhoff himself acknowledges there is no concrete evidence to support this.

the ‘Abbasid dynasty.<sup>54</sup> At some point in the mid-ninth century, and certainly before 873 when Ḥunayn died, Ibn al-Munajjim wrote to him in response to what he calls Ḥunayn’s damning remarks about people who have discerned the truth and have not pursued it, but have instead ignored proofs that are clear.<sup>55</sup> Ḥunayn evidently means Ibn al-Munajjim and Muslims like him, who might be expected to have the sophistication to see through the claims made about Islam, and particularly the prophethood of Muḥammad, and to appreciate the more refined points of Christian doctrine.

Ibn al-Munajjim was not daunted by this taunt, and in his reply he proceeds to demonstrate at length the qualities exhibited by Muḥammad that prove his authentic prophetic status. After first clarifying that there is unanimous agreement throughout the nations that Muḥammad was a real historical character,<sup>56</sup> he goes on to show how Muḥammad transformed the beliefs and social order of the pagan inhabitants of Arabia, demonstrating unrivalled insight into how this was to be done, as well as supreme intelligence.<sup>57</sup> Such an individual would not have been so rash as to challenge his people, among whom he knew there were competent poets, to try to emulate the language of the Qur’ān unless he possessed divinely-inspired knowledge that the people would not rise to the challenge. Thus, since he received this knowledge from God, he must have been a prophet.<sup>58</sup> It follows that those who continue to reject Muḥammad must acknowledge that they reject a true prophet.<sup>59</sup>

While there is no way of knowing whether this letter was written and sent during ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī’s lifetime, it is clear that the kind of arguments it contains were familiar to him. In the *Dīn wa-dawla* he remarks that he and his uncle Abū Zakkār Yaḥyā ibn Nu’mān both used to maintain that arguments for prophethood could not be based on the literary merits of a work,<sup>60</sup> meaning that whatever poetical qualities the Qur’ān possessed were not evidence for

54 S.K. Samir and P. Nwyia, *Une correspondance islamo-chrétienne entre Ibn al-Munağğim, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq et Qusṭa ibn Lūqā* (Patriologia Orientalis 40), Turnhout, 1981. The manuscript tradition is unclear about which member of the al-Munajjim family was the author of the Muslim letter, though the editors argue for Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī (pp. 538–543/[20–25]); see also B. Roggema, ‘Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Munajjim’, *CMR* 1, pp. 763–766.

55 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 556–557 § 4.

56 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 562–569 §§ 17–41.

57 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 568–575 §§ 42–56.

58 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 574–579 §§ 57–67.

59 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 578–583 §§ 68–81.

60 See below, pp. 282–283.



Muḥammad being a prophet. Arguments such as those in Ibn al-Munajjim's letter would presumably be common elements of conversation among intellectuals at court, and would require diplomacy and tact from a non-Muslim to resist. However, like Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, who wrote a confident reply to Ibn al-Munajjim, while he remained a Christian ‘Alī was evidently not persuaded by arguments based on the literary excellence of the Qur’ān, for as he says with regard to the position he had formally maintained together with his uncle, it was only after he had become a Muslim that he came to appreciate the qualities of the Qur’ān, and these were its contents rather than its form.

This raises the question as to why ‘Alī converted to Islam. As a man maybe approaching 70, a Christian who had worked close to caliphs for 20 years, and as an intimate of al-Mutawakkil with experience in defending his views during the conversations about matters of faith that must have circulated at the caliph's table, not to speak of formal gatherings, it seems that he would have no difficulty in resisting the sort of pressures that people like Ibn al-Munajjim might try to exert. So there is no immediately obvious reason, such as motivation for preferment or yielding to unremitting intellectual pressure.

‘Alī was by no means the first prominent Christian to convert at this time. In fact, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq knew of so many conversions that in the reply he wrote to Ibn al-Munajjim's letter he was able to categorise them, as follows: inability to counter opposing arguments; need to find a financially favourable position; desire to seek glory, honour and power; being tricked by false arguments and advice; resort to an escape from ignorant and uncultured people; concern to maintain family links.<sup>61</sup> None of these six is free or sincere inner conviction, which Ḥunayn would obviously not credit to anyone deserting his own faith. But equally, given ‘Alī's age and eminence in his profession, and the position he occupied in the society of al-Mutawakkil's court, it is difficult to see how

61 Samir and Nwyia, *Correspondence*, pp. 690–693 §§ 24–34. They are listed in J.M. Fiey, ‘Conversion à l’Islam de Juifs et de Chrétiens sous les Abbasides d’après les sources arabes et syriaques’, in J. Irmscher (ed.), *Rapports entre Juifs, Chrétiens et Musulmans*, Amsterdam, 1995, 13–28, pp. 14–15. See also M. Swanson, ‘A curious and delicate correspondence: the *Burhān* of Ibn al-Munajjim and the *Jawāb* of Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq’, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22 (2011) 173–183, p. 178. Swanson points out, p. 181, that whereas Ibn al-Munajjim was known for his culture and interest in scholarship, demonstrated in his building a public library outside Baghdad, he was not noted for theological scholarship, being remembered as the author of books on poetry and cooking. This raises the possibility that he composed the hubristically simple *Burhān* because, in a courtly atmosphere where the truths of Islam were taken so much for granted that no one would be thought to deny them, he could deceive himself into imagining the work was persuasive.

any of them describes his position very aptly, though it is significant that at the beginning of the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* he explains that a main reason for writing was to anticipate people who might accuse him of ‘trading the world for a religion, joy for delusion’ (*kayī abī’a dūnyā bi-dīn aw surūran bi-ghurūr*),<sup>62</sup> as though conscious of Ḥunayn’s third reason for converting, ‘desire to seek glory, honour and power’, and wanting to forestall accusations that he had sold his place in the true religion for the passing world and the perishable profit that might go with it.

‘Alī himself offers some clues about his conversion in the two works he wrote against his former faith.<sup>63</sup> The *Radd* contains a hint at the beginning that he is writing in order to give warning and advice to Christians. He does not say what about, but the rest of the surviving parts make it clear that this concerns the chaos of Christian beliefs. As he demonstrates the various ways in which Christian doctrines contradict not only themselves but also Christian scripture and also reason, he leaves no doubt that in his mind there is no coherence in his former faith, and no connection either with sources of rational enquiry or revealed truth.

Whether ‘Alī wrote the *Radd* soon after his conversion or following an interval, it is inconceivable that the problems with Christianity he discusses here, and the far-reaching contradictions he presents in such detail, only began to occur to him after he became a Muslim. It is far more likely that he came to appreciate them gradually, possibly under the tutelage of Muslims who were able to explain the direct relationships between the teachings of their faith, the Qur’ān and reason, and prompted ‘Alī to examine his own Christianity in the light of them. This certainly seems to be the inference that should be drawn from his short exposition of Islam at the beginning of the *Radd*, where he presents a seamless texture of revealed and rational statements about the oneness of God and his relationship with the world through prophetic messengers.<sup>64</sup> His account here exhibits a coherence that contrasts starkly with the ragged collection of Christian doctrines he then goes on to expose in the body of the *Radd*.

If this was the case, it would appear that gradually over time ‘Alī had absorbed influences from the Muslim environment that caused him to look on his own Christian faith from an Islamic perspective, and possibly one that

62 See below, pp. 62–63.

63 On ‘Alī’s attitude towards Christianity after his conversion, see D. Thomas, ‘Alī ibn Rabbān al-Ṭabarī: a convert’s assessment of his former faith’, in M. Tamcke (ed.), *Christians and Muslims in dialogue in the Islamic Orient of the Middle Ages*, Beirut, 2007, pp. 137–155.

64 See below, pp. 66–69.

was dominated by Mu‘tazilī preoccupations with God as utterly distinct and transcendent. This would throw into sharp detail Christian beliefs about the triune Godhead and about the immanence of God in the person of the incarnate Christ, not to speak of the relationship between these beliefs and Christian scripture. Unlike Muslim doctrine and the Qur’ān, the direct link between these doctrines and the Bible was tenuous at best, and was often hard to discern at all.

There may even be some traces in the *Radd* of problems that ‘Alī had wrestled with from an early age, as he had come to recognise contradictions between various biblical passages and had rejected traditional ways of reconciling them. The most obvious occurs in the latter part of the surviving text, where he examines a number of inconsistencies in the Gospels. Among these, one that evidently caused him continuing unease was the inclusion of the two jarring references to John the Baptist seeing the Holy Spirit confirming Jesus as God’s Son at his baptism before the start of his public ministry (Matthew 3:16–17), and then at a later stage sending some of his followers to ask Jesus whether he was indeed the one they were expecting (Matthew 11:2–19). ‘Alī recalls a Nestorian expert whom he names ‘the Interpreter’, quite probably Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), whom Nestorians acknowledged as an authority, attempting to reconcile the discrepancy by saying that John’s reason for sending his followers was so that they could satisfy themselves, because John himself was in no doubt. But ‘Alī retorts that even though John’s followers may have been uncertain about Jesus, they would surely have accepted John’s word about him if John had assured them that Jesus was the Christ.<sup>65</sup> In his reference to ‘the Interpreter’, he is clearly drawing on an old memory and indicating that this interpretation had never persuaded him, possibly even when he called himself a Christian. The problem this Nestorian was attempting to resolve may have been typical of the scriptural difficulties that had always made ‘Alī uneasy about his family’s faith.

It is significant that in both the *Radd* and the later *Dīn wa-dawla* ‘Alī generally accepts the text of the Bible—for him corruption lies in the interpretation given to scripture by Christians. He makes this abundantly clear in the *Radd* by using the Gospels as the basis of his arguments, and in the *Dīn wa-dawla* by making passages mainly from the Old Testament the centre of a great series of proofs that the coming of Islam and of Muḥammad are foretold in earlier scripture. It follows that when he refers to himself in the *Radd* as advising and counselling his former coreligionists, he conceives of his task as being to lead

65 See below, pp. 140–141.

them back to a proper reading of Christian scripture. He explicitly says this when he explains in his introduction to the *Radd* that his purpose is not to attack Christ or his true followers (*ahl ḥaqqihi*), but rather those Christian sects that are at variance with Christ and the Gospels and ‘corrupt the words’ (*ḥarrafa al-kalimāt*).<sup>66</sup> In saying this, he shows that he sees Christianity entirely from a Muslim perspective, as a body of teachings that issue from a scriptural base where the majestic transcendence of the one God is extolled. Such an attitude cannot have set in suddenly, but must surely have developed over the years when he was still a nominal Christian, and as a result of absorbing the Islamic modes of articulating belief that were all around.<sup>67</sup>

In these intimations given in the *Radd*, ‘Alī suggests that his conversion from Christianity to Islam was the outcome of, or at least closely related to, an intellectual conviction that his new faith possessed an integrated uniformity that the faith he was leaving did not.<sup>68</sup> By contrast, in the *Dīn wa-dawla* he speaks in terms that imply a more emotional and spiritual investment in what he has done. This is evident from the first introductory paragraph, where he talks of Islam as ‘the living light and the bridge that leads to the abode of safety and eternity, where there is no tribulation or deception’.<sup>69</sup> Later on, he refers to being careless about inquiring into the truth of religion before he became a Muslim, but now he can say that everything has changed because God ‘has removed the veil’ from his sight, has ‘opened the locks’ and has released him ‘from the darkness of delusion’.<sup>70</sup> His language is still about intellectual enlightenment in the main, though it is now tinged with a sense of personal liberation from confusion and also from the misapprehensions that could lead to eternal damnation.

An element that is prominent in the *Dīn wa-dawla* but is not mentioned in the extant parts of the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* is the part played in ‘Alī’s conversion by the Caliph al-Mutawakkil. The caliph is clearly behind the writing of the

66 See below, pp. 64–65.

67 Responding to the *Radd* in the thirteenth century, al-Ṣafī ibn al-‘Assāl judges that ‘Alī had never known Christianity properly, *Kitāb al-ṣaḥā’ih fī jawāb al-naṣā’ih*, ed. Murqus Jirjis, Cairo, 1926/27, p. 36; cf. Samir, *Réponse*, pp. 283, 308–309.

68 Cf. W. Haddad, ‘Continuity and change in religious adherence: ninth century Baghdad’, in M. Gervers and R.J. Bikhazi (eds), *Conversion and Continuity. Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, Toronto, 1990, 33–53, p. 46. Al-Ṣafī ibn al-‘Assāl’s judgement that ‘Alī would have been mentally too weak to know his mind at this age (*Kitāb al-ṣaḥā’ih*, pp. 35–36) must be accounted as an unfounded supposition that was intended to bolster his arguments against the credibility of the *Radd*.

69 See below, pp. 200–201.

70 See below, pp. 230–231.

book,<sup>71</sup> so references to him and extravagant statements of grateful thanks are to be expected. But there is more than this. At the beginning, ‘Alī refers to al-Mutawakkil giving guidance and advice about the book, but also more generally being dedicated to the promotion of Islam through the distribution of works that will defend it and prove its veracity, wishing ‘to arouse a desire for it in those who are ignorant of its superiority and of the fact that God has chosen Islam and its followers in [al-Mutawakkil’s] time’.<sup>72</sup> Behind the predictable hyperbole here, it is possible maybe to detect a trace of personal memory in the way that ‘Alī himself had been led by the caliph to take the step of conversion.

‘Alī makes this more explicit in his remarks at the end of the book, where he says: ‘Thanks are due to God for the way he has guided me, and to his servant and caliph Ja‘far al-Mutawakkil ‘alā Allāh, commander of the faithful (may God preserve his life), for what he has unswervingly brought me to, and has drawn me and others from the protected people to by his attracting and alarming, his esteeming and appreciating all people together’.<sup>73</sup> He evidently regards the caliph as closely linked with his conversion, possibly even instrumental in his decision.

These hints in ‘Alī’s two anti-Christian works give some clear indications about the circumstances attending his conversion. He evidently regarded Christianity as intellectually deficient and Islam as possessing coherence and logical structure. He also thought that Christianity was mistaken and Islam correct, and therefore made the personal step from error to truth, where he could be more sure of pleasing God. In this he was assisted by what he heard al-Mutawakkil say, and may have been personally encouraged by the caliph’s close attention.

That his conversion was real is beyond doubt.<sup>74</sup> The appearance of the *Radd* and *Dīn wa-dawla* in the years that followed gives clear testimony to this, added to which is that these were the first works on religious themes he had probably ever attempted. Although he came from a religious background, all the other works for which he was known were on medical and scientific topics. The relish with which he now turned to a new discipline attests

71 See below, pp. 204–207.

72 See below, pp. 204–207.

73 See below, pp. 472–473.

74 Adang, *Muslim writers*, p. 25 refers to three scholars who see ‘Alī as either an opportunist (Theodore Nöldeke), or following professional interests in a nominal conversion (Duncan Black Macdonald), or bowing to the caliph’s pressure (Max Meyerhof). But, on the basis of what is argued here it is difficult to accept any of these.

eloquently to his enthusiasm for his new faith and fresh zeal for exposing the errors of the one he had left behind.

But did 'Alī feel coerced to convert, or hear remarks from al-Mutawakkil about the awkwardness of having a Christian in his intimate circle? Possibly, though the evidence does not support this supposition. What seems more likely is that in the years spent in the service of the caliphs and in an atmosphere that was overwhelmingly Islamic, 'Alī came to look on religious matters from an Islamic point of view, and he gradually concluded that Christianity did not measure up. He does not say what precipitated his final decision, though it was not unlikely a combination of gathering intellectual conviction and personal attraction towards Islam or inducement towards it from those he worked with. This is clearly the sentiment in a statement he makes towards the end of the *Dīn wa-dawla*. Although he puts it into the mouth of a hypothetical convert to Islam, it undoubtedly betrays some personal feeling:

When I saw that one of the communities was in a powerful position and exalted circumstances in its number, greatness, purity, intelligence and virtue, declaring to us from their fathers and grandfathers what we have related, and presenting a book they have inherited century after century, which calls to proclaim the oneness and greatness of God, to believe in his messengers and prophets, and to reject associates and partners, which commands what is meritorious and noble and what accords with the rules of the prophets and the legacies of their covenants, which forbids evil, its exponents and roots, and addresses us in discourses that have proved true time after time and age after age, when I found the books of the prophets whom you believe in witnessing to him and foretelling his empire and religion, as we have made clear, I entered it and through it put my hope in what is from God.<sup>75</sup>

Whatever the process by which he left the faith in which he had been reared for the faith in which he had lived for 20 years, and whatever the immediate causes, there remains an unanswerable question. This is: how could the man who had evidently studied the Bible thoroughly in a Christian household and at Christian schools and had learned to interpret it according to Christian principles change so radically that when he became a Muslim he could retain his extensive knowledge of the text, but entirely expunge from his mind the methods of interpretation he had known and the results of their application? Suddenly,

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75 See below, pp. 462–463.

it seems, he was able to approach it without any of the presuppositions of his past, and could apply new interpretations that would have shocked and hurt his former self. Thus, in the *Dīn wa-dawla* he could now identify references to Muḥammad through instances of words derived from the root *ḥ.m.d.*, and interpret the key verse Isaiah 40:3–5 without any reference to the traditional Christian associations with John the Baptist, arising from quotations of it in all four Gospels, but with reference to the Muslim army’s defeat of the Sasanians at the Battle of Qadisiyya.<sup>76</sup>

The agility with which ‘Alī appears to have made this jump is startling, and it casts doubt on the depth of his original Christian beliefs. He certainly knew about the faith and its scriptural basis, but his personal loyalty and involvement is less certain. One can surmise that over the years in a Muslim atmosphere and away from family connections, and with his father and uncle long dead, he gradually loosened his allegiance so that the step was not very great. By the time he came to write the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* he was evidently settled in his mind about the contradictions between the Bible and Christian doctrines, showing that he must have come to accept what he saw as a simple correlation between scripture and belief. He was also settled on a perception of God that excluded the possibility of Incarnation. His mental framework had become fully Muslim. And by the time he came to write the *Dīn wa-dawla* five or so years later, he was convinced that Muḥammad was not only the deliverer of the supreme message from God, but was himself a paradigm of human behaviour (though with some correspondences with the asceticism and human mildness of Jesus). These attitudes must surely have been seeping into his thoughts for years, possibly meaning that he had not been an observant Christian for some time before he took the final step.

A hint of this is contained in a remark ‘Alī makes towards the end of the *Radd*, in one of the fragments preserved only by the Coptic scholar Ibn al-‘Aṣṣāl. Following what appears to be a sequence of arguments against the logical possibility of the Incarnation taking place, involving one Person of the Trinity uniting with a human, he says: ‘These are matters that have driven me away from you, Christians’,<sup>77</sup> affirming that intellectual reservations about Christian doctrines he had harboured for years have grown and have finally got the better of his loyalty to his ancestral faith.

The actual circumstances will never be known. What is strange is that ‘Alī is hardly remembered by Muslim scholars for his conversion, as opposed to his

<sup>76</sup> See below, pp. 362–363.

<sup>77</sup> See below, pp. 160–161.

work as a medical authority and political secretary. His two post-conversion writings only began to be noticed (at least in extant works) about a century after his death, and then the *Radd* was of interest almost entirely to those who had taken the same steps of conversion; it did not attract a Christian response until a good four centuries after it was written. Similarly, the *Dīn wa-dawla* only slowly came to wider notice, and then mainly as a source of proof-texts for Muslims who sought to demonstrate that Muḥammad had been foretold in the Bible.

We now turn to these two works.



# The Manuscripts and Language of ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī’s Polemical Works

## *Al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*

The Arabic text containing *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* is taken from the single manuscript which is preserved in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul.<sup>1</sup> It was discovered in 1934 by Maurice Bouyges, who had written scathingly about the authenticity of ‘Alī’s *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*.<sup>2</sup> It breaks off in the middle of folio 45<sup>r</sup>, leaving the rest of the page blank, which shows that it is a copy of an earlier version that was itself evidently incomplete. The text was published in 1959 by I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch in an edition that is generally regarded as unsatisfactory since it suffers from a number of misreadings of the manuscript.<sup>3</sup> Some idea of the lost continuation of the text can be gained from the reply made by the Copt al-Ṣafī ibn al-‘Assāl in the mid-13th century in his *Kitāb al-ṣaḥā’ih fī jawāb al-naṣā’ih*.<sup>4</sup> The Arabic text is written in a clear *naskh* script in black ink with headings in red ink.

Fol. 1<sup>r</sup> of the manuscript bears the following title and note:

الرَّد عَلَى النَّصَارَى لَعَلَى بْنِ زَيْن بَانَ الْمُهْتَدَى. كَتَبَهُ أَفْقَرُ الْأَنَامِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ  
الْقَاضِي بِمِصْرَ، ثُمَّ مَلِكُهُ الْعَبْدُ الْفَقِيرُ إِلَى رَبِّهِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَدْعُو... غُفِرَ لَهُمَا

Fols 1<sup>v</sup>–2<sup>r</sup> are left blank, while both fols 1<sup>r</sup> and 2<sup>r</sup> bear a stamp containing the following note:

مِمَّا وَقَفَهُ الْوَزِيرُ الشَّهِيدُ عَلِيٌّ بِأَمْرٍ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بِشَرَطِ أَنْ لَا يُخْرَجَ مِنْ خَزَائِنِهِ

The *incipit* (fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) reads:

1 Şehid Ali Paşa Library, 1628.

2 Bouyges, ‘Aliy ibn Rabban aṭ-Ṭabariy’, *Der Islam* 22 (1935) 120–121.

3 I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch, ‘Ar-radd ‘alā-n-Naṣārā de ‘Alī aṭ-Ṭabarī’, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint Joseph* 26 (1959) 115–148.

4 Ed. Murqus Jirjis, Cairo, 1926/27 (the incomplete text of the Istanbul manuscript corresponds with the quotations from the *Radd* given in this work until near the end of chapter 9, p. 80). See below, pp. 160–169.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم: وما توفيقي إلا بالله. قال الفقير إلى الله الراجي عفوهِ  
ومغفرته علي بن زين بن مبعوثا والأب متبوعا مطاعا

and the *explicit* (fol. 45<sup>r</sup>):

فصار الأب باعثا والإبن مبعوثا والأب متبوعا مطاعا

### *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*

*Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* has survived in two manuscripts, one of them very ancient that has been widely known for well over a century, and the other more recent that has come to light only in the last few years. The more recent is a slavish copy of the earlier.

The earlier manuscript is preserved in the John Rylands Library, Manchester<sup>5</sup> (hereafter *Dīn A*). It consists of 73 folios and is not in the best condition, with the opening and closing folios badly mutilated or damaged. The title of the work appears on the first folio (1<sup>v</sup>), written by a later hand. It reads:

كتاب الدين والدولة كتب في سنة ٦١٦ في إثبات نبوة نبيّا محمد صلى الله عليه  
وسلم تأليف الحافظ علي بن زين الطبري ... مولى أمير المؤمنين، الله يمدده  
آمين

Three further short notes written by a much later hand appear on the same folio:

في الأصناف الثلاثة الملكية واليعقوبية والنسطورية  
في المعاني التي اختلفت فيها التلامذة  
في الأحرف المشكلات التي احتجوا بها لشرعهم

This first folio also contains a note written by a later hand which states that this is a copy taken from the author's own text. It reads:

5 MS Crawford 631 [69]. For a description of the contents of this manuscript, see A. Mingana, *Catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, Manchester, 1934, pp. 70–74.

نقلت من أصله من خط مؤلفه. قال علي بن زين مؤلف هذا الكتاب رحمه الله كان كاتب المازيار صاحب طبرستان ... فلما أخذ المعتصم المازيار على يد عبدالله بن طاهر استأمنه وصار من جملة ندماء الخليفة المتوكل على الله وكتبت له السعادة، وصار عالماً فاضلاً محدثاً صاحب تأليف. ونقلت هذه من خط مؤلفه كما سيأتي ذكره أيضاً في آخر الكتاب، وهو كتاب نفيس لا يعرف فضله إلا من أمعن النظر فيه وبالله التوفيق. انتهى.<sup>6</sup>

The *incipit* (fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) reads:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم: وبه نستعين. قال علي بن زين (sic) الطبري، مولى أمير المؤمنين

A further note on the last folio (73<sup>v</sup>) gives the *explicit* of the work, which also contains some additional details of its authorship. It reads:

تم الكتاب والله الحمد والمنّة، وذلك في بكرة يوم الجمعة الرابع من المحرم سنة ست عشرة وستمائة، أحسن الله مقدمها. علّق له لنفسه العبد الفقير إلى رحمة الله تعالى وعفوه عبد الحميد بن الحسين بن بشيق، حامداً لله تعالى على نعمه، ومصلحاً على سيدنا محمد نبيه وآله وصحبه ومسلماً عليهم تسليماً كثيراً دائماً أبداً. قلت وهذا الكتاب آخر ما علّق جمال الدين بعون الله لنفسه لأنه مات بعد تعليقه بقليل.

6 See Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. xiv. Mingana translates the badly preserved note as: 'This has been transcribed from the autograph of the author. 'Alī ibn Zayn, the writer of this book (may God have mercy on him) says, My father was writer to Māziyār, the master of Ṭabaristān'. The note actually reads: 'This has been taken from the author's text. It says that 'Alī ibn Zayn (*qāla* 'Alī ibn Zayn, repeating the mistaken form of Rabban), the author of this book (may God have mercy on him), was writer to Māziyār, the master of Ṭabaristān'. There is no mention of 'Alī's father.

This gives the date of 22 March 1219, about 360 solar years after the putative date of composition in 855. The fact that it was made from a copy known to be 'Alī's own autograph would appear to suggest that there were maybe not many other copies around, if any.<sup>7</sup>

This possibility is strengthened by the information given in the more recent manuscript, 148 pages long, which is preserved in the Egyptian National Library, Cairo, 'Ilm al-kalām 1377 (hereafter *Dīn B*). A note on the title page says that this copy was made in Constantinople by Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Abī Maṣṣūr in 1168 AH (1764 AD) from a copy made 552 years earlier that had been taken from the author's own copy. It reads as follows:

كُتِبَ الدِّينُ وَالْدَوْلَةُ فِي إِثْبَاتِ نَبْوَةِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِمَوْلَفِهِ الْحَافِظِ  
الْمُتَقَنِّ الْعَلَامَةِ النُّحْرِيرِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ زَيْنِ الطَّبْرِيِّ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى. نُقِلَتْ هَذِهِ  
النُّسخَةُ مِنْ نُسْخَةٍ مَكْتُوبَةٍ عَلَيْهَا مَا يَأْتِي: اسْتَكْتُبْتُ (sic) هَذِهِ النُّسخَةَ الْمُبَارَكَةَ  
الْعَدِيمَةَ النَّظِيرَ بِالْقُسْطَنْطِينِيَّةِ الْحَمِيَّةِ فِي سَنَةِ الْأَلْفِ وَمِائَةِ وَثَمَانٍ وَسِتِينَ  
عَنْ نُسْخَةٍ كُتِبَتْ قَبْلَ هَذَا التَّارِيخِ بِخَمْسِمِائَةٍ وَاثْنَيْنِ وَخَمْسِينَ سَنَةً، وَقَدْ  
نُقِلَتْ تِلْكَ النُّسخَةُ عَنْ نُسْخَةِ الْمُصَنِّفِ بِرِسْمِ الصَّاحِبِ جَمَالِ الدِّينِ بْنِ أَبِي  
الْمَنْصُورِ.

It goes on to reproduce a few biographical details about 'Alī from the earlier manuscript, and adds the detail that he converted to Islam under the caliph al-Mutawakkil:

وَقَدْ كُتِبَ فِي ظَاهِرِ تِلْكَ النُّسخَةِ أَنَّ مُؤَلِّفَ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ كَانَ نَصْرَانِيًّا وَكَانَ  
فِي حَالِ نَصْرَانِيَّتِهِ كَاتِبَ الْمَازِيَارِ صَاحِبَ طَبْرِسْتَانَ. وَلَمَّا أَخَذَ الْمُعْتَصِمُ بِاللَّهِ

7 This suggestion may appear to be contradicted by Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī's remark in *Ghurar al-adilla* concerning the form of 'Alī's name. He gives this as Ibn Rabā' al-Ṭabarī, though he says that it appears as Ibn Rabban al-Ṭabīb (the physician) 'in some copies' (*fī ba'ḍ al-nusakh*), suggesting that he may have known more than one version of the *Dīn wa-dawla* (Adang, 'A rare case of biblical testimonies to the Prophet Muḥammad', pp. 316 and 299, n. 8). But this need not be the case if, as Adang suggests, these 'copies' were excerpts of the work that contained 'mainly the most popular proof texts which had become fixed ingredients in Muslim polemics and apologetics' (p. 299).

المأزى على يد عبد الله بن طاهر استأمن مؤلف هذا الكتاب ثم أسلم على يد  
المتوكل على الله وصار من ندمائه وألف هذا الكتاب بإشارته كما يشير إلى  
ذلك في بعض عباراته. انتهى.

A brief note in the colophon of the manuscript (p. 148) reads: تَمَّتْ فِي حَلَبِ سَنَةِ ١٣٠٨ ('completed in Aleppo in 1308' [1890 AD]), which is difficult to interpret: it presumably means either that someone had completed reading through it in this year, or that the extant manuscript is, in fact, a copy of the copy made by Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Abī Maṣṣūr in 1168 AH.

This information provides persuasive proof that the Cairo manuscript is a copy of the John Rylands manuscript, including the dating of 552 lunar years after the earlier copy, which agrees with the date of 616 on the earlier manuscript. Again, the fact that this was taken from the one earlier known copy suggests that there were very few others in circulation, if any. As may be expected, the Cairo manuscript is a very close copy of the John Rylands, with the one main point of difference that it incorporates the marginal notes of the earlier manuscript into its main text. Its value lies in the assistance it gives in reading words that are no longer legible in the John Rylands manuscript, as well as supplying a few lacunae towards the beginning of the work.

### The Language of 'Alī al-Ṭabarī's Works: Divergences from Classical Usage

The language of these two works is Middle Arabic, the form which by the time of writing had diverged in orthography, morphology and syntax from the standard classical tongue (though there is, of course, no way of knowing whether this language is that of 'Alī himself or of the scribes of the extant copies). Here details of the most important of these linguistic features are listed, followed by representative examples, and, where relevant, attention is drawn to discussions of them in the following authorities:

- J. Blau, *A grammar of Christian Arabic* (*Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 267, 276, 279, *Subsidia* 27, 28, 29), Louvain, 1966–1967 [= Blau].
- J. Fück, *Arabiya: Untersuchungen zur arabischen Sprach- und Stilgeschichte* (*Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil. hist. Kl., Bd. 45, Heft 1*), Berlin, 1950 [= Fück].

- I.-A. Khalifé, *'Makḥṭūṭ al-ʿilm al-ṭabīʿī wa-mīzātuh al-lughawīyya'*, *Al-Machriq* 62 (1968) 485–894 [= Khalifé].  
 G. Rahmé, *'Risāla fī faḍīlat al-ʿafāf'*, *Al-Machriq* 62 (1968) 3–74 [= Rahmé].

### 1 Orthography

*Dāl* and *dhāl*, *ṣād* and *ḍād*, *ṭāʾ* and *ẓāʾ* not distinguished:

(*Radd*, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>) وهذا إيمان المسيح (*Radd*, fol. 5<sup>v</sup>) متى تلميد المسيح  
 المحدودة (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>) مارقوس التلميد (*Radd*, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>) قال لتلا مدته  
 اضطرار الخالق (*Radd*, fol. 20<sup>v</sup>) وجاء منقداً للناس (*Radd*, fol. 13<sup>r</sup>) المدمومة  
 (*Radd*, fol. 23<sup>r</sup>) التي أطنها (*Radd*, fol. 23<sup>r</sup>) من نظر (*Radd*, fol. 29<sup>r</sup>).

Divergences in use of *hamza*:

- a) Omission of *hamza* in medial and final positions (cf. Blau, pp. 92 f.; Khalifé, p. 490; Rahmé, p. 12):

لمشيقي بل (*Radd*, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>) لا ابتداء له ولا انتها (*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>r</sup>) وابدا العذر  
 أجزاء من أجزاء (*Radd*, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>) [المسألة الثانية] (*Radd*, fol. 5<sup>v</sup>) المشية  
 جت (*Radd*, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>) [نسألهم عن المسيح] (*Radd*, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>) الدنيا  
 زمرة (*Radd*, fol. 31<sup>v</sup>) النداء المسموع من السما (*Radd*, fol. 16<sup>r</sup>) [جئت]  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>) متنبيات النسا (*Dīn A*, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>) وعلمنا منهم (*Dīn A*, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>) الأنبيا  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 13<sup>r</sup>) وكثرة السؤال (*Dīn A*, fol. 11<sup>v</sup>) الأنبيا والأصفيا (*Dīn A*, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>)  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 19<sup>v</sup>) (جاءت به) وأما ما جات به (*Dīn A*, fol. 19<sup>v</sup>).

- b) Replacement of *hamza* by *yāʾ* (cf. Blau, p. 94; Rahmé, p. 12):

واهاب (*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>r</sup>) عضوا من أعضايه (*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) يقول قايل منهم  
 وأول المسائل (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>) وسائر الأنبيا (*Dīn A*, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) اعدايه  
 وأنا أنبيكم بالأمثال (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>r</sup>) كما قالت طوايف منهم (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>)  
 ليلا يتعلق متعلق (*Radd*, fols 30<sup>r</sup>, 40<sup>v</sup>, 45<sup>r</sup>) [ولئن كان ما] (*Radd*, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>).

(*Radd*, fol. 32<sup>v</sup>); الفوز الدائم (*Dīn* B, p. 1); مثل قول القايل (*Dīn* A, fol. 4<sup>v</sup>); في الدلائل (*Dīn* A, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 2); افتتح شرايع دينه وشرايط حقه (*Dīn* A, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 8); فن أراد حقايق (*Dīn* A, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 10); سننه (*Dīn* A, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>); ونظرايهم عليهم السلام (*Dīn* A, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 12); وشرايعه (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 16); متنبئات (for متنبئات) (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 16); رسائل الحواريين (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>); من قلايد القوم (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 17); يا محمد جيتك (for رائعة) (*Dīn* A, fol. 23<sup>r</sup>); وأمثال ربيعة (*Dīn* A, fol. 13<sup>r</sup>); (جئتك).

c) *Alif* marking *hamza* (cf. Blau, p. 85):

جأت به الأخبار (*Dīn* A, fol. 18<sup>r</sup>).

*Tā' marbūṭa*:

a) *Tā' marbūṭa* written without dots (cf. Blau, p. 122):

وحقيقه (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>); بثلثه الهه (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>); شريعه أهل الإسلام (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>); هذه الشريعه (*Radd*, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>); (المسألة) (for المسئلة الثانيه) (*Radd*, fol. 4<sup>r</sup>); ذلك (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>); لمخالفه الإنجيل (*Radd*, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>); في غرفه قد أغلقوا بابها (*Radd*, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>); الدنيا والاخره (*Dīn* A, fol. 11<sup>v</sup>); والصدقه والزكاة (*Dīn* A, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>).

b) Confusion of *tā' marbūṭa* and *tā' maftūḥa* (cf. Blau, pp. 115f.):

من ابنت (*Dīn* B, p. 30); ومن صحت آية الذئب (*Dīn* B, p. 5); وهي مشرقت (*Dīn* A, fol. 68<sup>r</sup>); هذه الكرمه.

Confusion of *alif maqṣūra* and *alif mamdūda*:

فكيف بمن سمّا (*Radd*, fol. 42<sup>v</sup>); (غنى) (*Radd*, fol. 42<sup>v</sup>); ولا غنا بنا وبكم (*Dīn* A, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 15); ومنهم من أحيى الميت (*Dīn* A, fol. 24<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 49); (بأعلى) (*Dīn* A, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 49); بأعلا صوته.

ومع الصبيّ (for العليّ) (*Dīn* A, fol. 34<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 69); يد ابنها العليا. (p. 55).  
 (للأسرى) (for وتقول للأسرا) (*Dīn* A, fol. 35<sup>r</sup>); حتى تربّا  
 (ربّي) (for فمن ربّا لي هؤلاء) (*Dīn* A, fol. 50<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, fol. 49<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 99);  
 (p. 101).

Confusion of *alif maqṣūra* and *alif hamza*:

(النداء) (for وأما الندى) (*Radd*, fol. 40<sup>v</sup>); (ونشأ) (for ونشئ) (*Radd*, fol. 30<sup>v</sup>).

Confusion of *alif maqṣūra* and *yā'*:

بالله (*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>r</sup>); دين الإسلام الحنيفي (*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>r</sup>); من أول عمري  
 (إلى) (*Dīn* A, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>); كافّة الخلق (بعث الله تعالى) (*Radd*, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>); الحى  
 إلى الباطل (*Dīn* A, fols 5<sup>v</sup>–6<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 7); ومنهم من يرمى ببذنه (*Dīn* A, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>);  
 (نبيّ) (for ولم يثبت عليه نبى) (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 14);  
 (عليّ أمته) (*Dīn* A, fol. 11<sup>v</sup>); والله لا يهدى (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>); ولا أهتدى  
 (مساعا إلى إبطاله) (*Dīn* A, fol. 16<sup>v</sup>); (fol. 13<sup>v</sup>).

Confusion of *kāf* and *lām*:

(ألسنتكم) (for ألسنتلم) (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>); (لكم) (for أوضحت لكم)  
 (أنطاكية) (for في بيعة أنطالية) (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r-v</sup>).

Lengthening of short vowels:

فإنه لا يخلوا (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>); فانفتح ونقول (*Radd*, fol. 6<sup>v</sup>); يعرف بنوا اسرائيل  
 لا يقدر (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>); ويدعوا الأمم (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>r</sup>); هأنذا (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>v</sup>);  
 قد (*Radd*, fols 27<sup>v</sup>, 43<sup>v</sup>); وليس يخلوا أنّ (*Radd*, fol. 16<sup>v</sup>); أحد أن يدنوا منه  
 في (*Dīn* A, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 2); مشركوا العرب (*Radd*, fol. 32<sup>r</sup>); فزتي بنعمة  
 وأقدّم ما أرجوا (*Dīn* A, fol. 7<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 11); الجزء الذي يتلوا هذا الجزء



وقراءة (*Dīn* A, fol. 9<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 11); ليس في القرآن (*Dīn* A, fols 9<sup>r</sup>, 10<sup>r-v</sup>); أويهموا أويزلّ فيها (*Dīn* A, fol. 14<sup>r</sup>); فأما القرآن (*Dīn* A, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>); (*Dīn* A, fol. 14<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 24); نبي بمكة يدعوا إلى الله (*Dīn* A, fol. 16<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 30); ربّانوا اليهود (*Dīn* A, fol. 24<sup>r</sup>); ليعلم بنوا اسرائيل (*Dīn* A, fol. 27<sup>r</sup>); بنوا عمّهما (*Dīn* A, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 54); ما يدعوا إلى حسن الظنّ (*Dīn* A, fol. 33<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 66); أخبر أنّ إله السماء (*Dīn* A, fols 58<sup>r</sup>, 63<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, pp. 117, 127); لا يخلوا دانيال (*Dīn* A, fol. 59<sup>v</sup>); ويدعوا إليها (for ويدعو) (*Dīn* A, fol. 61<sup>v</sup>).

Shortening of long vowels (cf. Blau, pp. 65 f.):

فامتلت (*Radd*, fol. 31<sup>v</sup>); (البشارة for) البشارة (*Radd*, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>); وأذكر ما فيها (*Radd*, fols 38<sup>v</sup>–39<sup>r</sup>); (فامتلات for) منها المنازل (*Radd*, fol. 40<sup>r</sup>); وأشهد ذوي عدل منكم (*Dīn* A, fol. 11<sup>r</sup>); ابراهيم واسماعيل (*Dīn* B, p. 24); (الصالحات for) وعملوا الصلحات (*Dīn* A, fol. 19<sup>r</sup>); (ملاك for) ملك الله (*Dīn* A, fols 24<sup>v</sup>, 35<sup>r</sup>, 41<sup>r</sup>); (تعالى for) إنّ الله تعالى (*Dīn* A, fols 34<sup>v</sup>–35<sup>r</sup>); (وها أنت تجبلين for) ... فقد سمى النبيّ (*Dīn* A, fol. 34<sup>v</sup>); (وها أنا وحيدة for) وها أنا وحيدة (*Dīn* B, p. 101); (فيها for) فيها (*Dīn* A, fol. 47<sup>v</sup>); (فأخبر تبارك for) بأنّ الله تعالى (*Dīn* A, fols. 56<sup>r</sup>, 70<sup>r</sup>, 71<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 103); (A, fols 67<sup>r</sup>, 68<sup>v</sup>).

Variation in spelling of proper nouns and other words of foreign origin:

المليكة [for القيامة] (*Radd*, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* A, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 22); أبو سفين / أبا سفين (*Dīn* A, fol. 16<sup>v</sup>); [الملائكة] (*Radd*, fols 12<sup>r</sup>, 20<sup>r</sup>, 21<sup>r</sup>, 27<sup>v</sup>); [الملكية] (*Radd*, fol. 20<sup>v</sup>); الصلاة والصوم والزكوة (*Dīn* B, p. 146).

Coalescence of words (cf. Blau, pp. 128f.):

فكيف ما أردتم هذا (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>v</sup>) (وكلّ ما وصانع كلما يرى  
 (*Dīn* A, fol. 43<sup>v</sup>) (يا أمير المؤمنين (for يامير المؤمنين (*Radd*, fol. 43<sup>v</sup>) (فكيفما القول  
 (*Dīn* A, fol. 30<sup>r</sup>) (فها أنا (for فهانا إلهك (*Dīn* A, fol. 30<sup>r</sup>) (يا آبة (for يآبة  
 (*Dīn* A, fol. 44<sup>v</sup>) (يايتها الأمم (for يا أيها (*Dīn* A, fol. 45<sup>r</sup>) (يايتها الشاكون  
 (*Dīn* A, fol. 45<sup>v</sup>) (يا آيتا (*Dīn* A, fol. 56<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 114).

## 2 Morphology

Demonstrative pronouns: use of هاؤلا and هاؤلا instead of هؤلاء (cf. Blau, pp. 136f.):

وهاؤلا (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>) سميت هاؤلا (*Dīn* B, p. 15); سميت هاؤلا (*Dīn* A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 16); إخوانهم هاؤلا (*Dīn* A, fol. 17<sup>v</sup>); وكان هاؤلا (*Dīn* A, fol. 19<sup>r</sup>).

Anomalous plurals (cf. Blau, p. 230):

خالفوا الإنجيلات (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>r</sup>) في البيوتات (*Dīn* A, fol. 19<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 35); بالجفاء والحروبات (*Dīn* A, fol. 33<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 66); مصر والشامات (*Dīn* A, fol. 36<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 71); والنوبة والأحاييش (*Dīn* B, p. 136).

## 3 Syntax

Omission of the definite article (cf. Blau, pp. 364f.):

(الروح) (for روح القدس) (*Radd*, fol. 28<sup>v</sup>) في لغة السريانية (*Radd*, fols 35<sup>r</sup>, 35<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* A, fol. 13<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 22); (الناصره) (for إلى مدينه ناصره) (*Radd*, fol. 39<sup>v</sup>); فهذا في كتب (*Dīn* A, fol. 68<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 136); في بلاد الروم وفرنجة (*Dīn* A, fol. 41<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn* B, p. 83).

Numerals (cf. Blau, p. 368):

وقتل يشوع بن نون أحداً (*Dīn A*, fol. 58<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 118); أربع حيوانات  
وثلاثين ملكاً (*Dīn A*, fol. 66<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 134).

Definite nouns in construct state (cf. Fück, p. 61):

(for دهر) إلى الدهر الداهرين (*Dīn A*, fol. 55<sup>r</sup>); (أبد) الأبد الآبدین  
(*Dīn A*, fol. 58<sup>r</sup>); (بحساب) بالحساب الجمل (*Dīn A*, fol. 60<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*,  
p. 123).

Confusion in the use of gender:

(إحادهما) بإشارتان أحدهما (*Dīn B*, p. 70).

Confusion in the use of cases (cf. Blau, pp. 317 f.; Khalifé, p. 491; Rahmé, p. 12):

(*Radd*, fol. 2<sup>r</sup>) بلغت من العمر سبعون سنة; (*Radd*, fol. 1<sup>v</sup>) أن لنا صانع  
(*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>r</sup>) وافقوا المسلمون; (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>) كان عندهم كافر بها  
إنه; (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>) كأساً فيها مشروباً; (*Radd*, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>) وناول الحواريون  
نخالق الدنيا; (*Radd*, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>) لا يكون موجود; (*Radd*, fol. 9<sup>r</sup>) كان صبي  
أشدّ تفريقاً; (*Radd*, fol. 18<sup>r</sup>) والمسمّر في يده; (*Radd*, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>) عندهم معدوما  
إن الله حالا; (*Radd*, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>) لا يتمّ لهم قرباناً ولا نسكاً; (*Radd*, fol. 22<sup>v</sup>)  
(*Radd*, fol. 31<sup>r</sup>) ما دام باب التوبة مفتوح وسبب النجاة موجود; (*Radd*, fol. 31<sup>r</sup>)  
أقدمتم على أمر; (*Radd*, fol. 37<sup>r</sup>) وقد فسّر مفسراً من النسطورية; (*Radd*, fol. 37<sup>v</sup>)  
فإنّ; (*Radd*, fol. 43<sup>r</sup>) لأنّ أهل النصرانية مجتمعين; (*Radd*, fol. 37<sup>v</sup>) فرياً  
(*Dīn A*, fol. 19<sup>r</sup>) لا يجد أحداً ... سييلاً; (*Radd*, fol. 44<sup>r</sup>) هذان الإسمان  
(*Dīn A*, fol. 67<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn B*) وكان له ... وتذليلاً; (*Dīn B*, p. 123) وكان جسدي  
p. 135).

Indicative mood used for jussive after *lam* (cf. Blau, p. 263; Fück, p. 61; Khalifé, p. 492; Rahmé, p. 12):

ليؤمنون (Radd, fol. 15<sup>v</sup>); لم يراه أحد (Radd, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>); ليكون ما تشاء أنت  
 ولم يحكي الإنجيل (Radd, fol. 34<sup>v</sup>); ولم يهتدي (Radd, fol. 15<sup>v</sup>); بأنك  
 (Radd, fol. 36<sup>r</sup>).

Nominative used for genitive (cf. Blau, p. 263; Fück, p. 61; Khalifé, p. 492; Rahmé, p. 12):

(Dīn ثلاثين) (for منذ ثلثون سنة) (Radd, fol. 38<sup>v</sup>) ضرب موسى بعصاه البحر  
 A, fol. 60<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 120).

Violation of rules of grammatical accord:

(a) Lack of concord between subject and predicate (cf. Blau, p. 281):

فالخالق الأزلي إذا مذروعاً موزوناً (Radd, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>) أن اللحم والعظم مصنوعاً  
 (Radd, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>); فإن يكن الموصوف بهذه الصفات خالق أزلي  
 انحطاط خالق الدنيا ... عاراً (Radd, fol. 26<sup>v</sup>); وهذا أيضاً تناقضاً  
 (Radd, fol. 19<sup>v</sup>) ومنقصةً

(b) Lack of concord between verb and subject in a verbal clause (cf. Blau, p. 281):

(دخلوا) إن بني الله دخل (Radd, fol. 19<sup>v</sup>); المعاني التي تقدمت ذكرها  
 أن من كن (Radd, fol. 44<sup>v</sup>) (كان) كانت الإسمان (Radd, fol. 41<sup>v</sup>);  
 نجد التوراة التي (Dīn A, fol. 8<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 12); تلك الخصال معه ووجدن له  
 هذه خلافتكم ردّ عليكم (Dīn A, fol. 14<sup>r</sup>); ... يقول  
 (Dīn A, fol. 28<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 55).

(c) Lack of concord between relative pronouns and their antecedents (cf. Blau, p. 573):

(الذين for) ومثل الذي عقدوا (Radd, fol. 21<sup>v</sup>) والذي لا أول له ... التي ابتدع (Radd, fol. 36<sup>v</sup>).

(d) Lack of concord between a noun and a demonstrative pronoun referring to it:

(هذه for) ورغبتك هذا (Radd, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>) صرف هذا الكأس عني فاصرفها (Radd, fol. 33<sup>r</sup>); وليس هذه (Dīn A, fol. 64<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 130). فهذا أخنوخ وإيليا صعدا (Radd, fol. 42<sup>r</sup>).

(e) Lack of concord between a noun and a pronominal suffix:

الحيوان الرابع (Dīn A, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>) من الأمور التي لا يقوم دين ولا دنيا إلا به الذي كان مخالفاً لمن كلهن (Dīn A, fol. 58<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 118).

### Observations on the Texts

In addition to the linguistic characteristics listed above, there are a number of idiosyncratic features in the texts of the manuscript of the *Radd* and the two manuscripts of the *Dīn wa-dawla*. These are probably to be attributed to carelessness (it is impossible to say whether this was on the part of 'Alī himself or the copyists of the manuscripts) rather than to their reflecting genuine linguistic features of Middle Arabic.

The most noteworthy is the frequent disregard shown for diacritical points of consonants:

من حجة (Radd, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) (جسده for) في حسده (Radd, fol. 2<sup>v</sup>) (حجة for) العقل (Radd, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>) (ينجو / ناج for) ولا ينحو مني ناح (Radd, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>) (الإجماع for) وبعد هذا الإجماع (Dīn A, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>) مثل مالانخي وحجي (Dīn A, fol. 31<sup>r</sup>) (جسدي for) قطع من حسدي (Dīn A, fol. 9<sup>v</sup>) (وحجي for)

ضَلَّتْ نَاقَتَهُ فَعَلَ يَسْأَلُ عَنْهَا (for فَعَلَ) (*Dīn A*, fol. 18<sup>r</sup>); *tā'* appears for *thā'* (e.g. بَاعَ ضَيْعَتَهُ وَأَتَا بِتَمْنَاهَا (for بَتَمْنَاهَا) (*Dīn A*, fol. 30<sup>r</sup>); *tā'* for *zā'*, e.g. بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ عَظِيمَيْنِ (for عَظِيمَيْنِ) (*Radd*, fol. 32<sup>v</sup>), ظَلَمَ ظَالِمًا (for ظَلَمَ ظَالِمًا) (*Radd*, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>), قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَطْهَرَ (for يَطْهَرُ) (*Dīn A*, fol. 21<sup>r</sup>), وَنَظَرَ إِلَيْهِ أَهْلُ الشَّامِ (for وَنَظَرَ) (*Dīn A*, fol. 29<sup>v</sup>); *ʿayn* for *ghayn*, e.g. قَامَ عَلَى عَرَرٍ عَظِيمٍ (for عَالِبٍ) (*Radd*, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>), أَوْ سُرُورًا بَعُورًا (for غُرُورًا) (*Radd*, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>); *ghayn* for *ʿayn*, e.g. فِي سِرٍّ وَلَا غَلَانِيَةٍ (for عِلَانِيَةٍ) (*Dīn A*, fol. 31<sup>r</sup>).

Some consonants (e.g. *bā'*, *tā'*, *qāf*, *nūn*, and *yā'*) are occasionally written without any dots at all. *Dāl* and *dhāl*, *qād* and *zā'* are often not distinguished, as mentioned above. In all these cases the correct pointing has been restored.

A noteworthy feature of the text of the Egyptian National Library manuscript of the *Dīn wa-dawla* (*Dīn B*) is that the phrase: صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ (عليهما/عليهم) وَسَلَّمَ is often, if not exclusively, abbreviated as صَلَّعَم.

Other examples of carelessness are the many instances of fluctuation in spellings of words, particularly those of foreign origin as has been noted above.

As might be expected, the language of his works makes clear that 'Alī was fully acquainted with Syriac. This is already obvious from external evidence. For example, in the *Firdaws al-ḥikma* he reveals that his father was regarded as such a leading scholar within his community that he was accorded the Syriac title *rabban* (the source of widespread misunderstanding, and cause of some biographers to identify him as Jewish), which indicates that 'Alī himself was brought up in a Syriac-speaking household.<sup>8</sup> He also says that he translated the *Firdaws al-ḥikma* from its original Arabic into Syriac, unequivocally attesting to his facility in this language.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, he was remembered as less capable in Arabic than those with whom he worked wished he might be,<sup>10</sup> so it is not unlikely that this was his second language, presumably after Syriac.

Within the works, he is clearly preoccupied with Syriac and Syrians, mentioning them with some frequency, particularly in the *Dīn wa-dawla*:

8 Above, p. 10.

9 See *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, p. 8: ثُمَّ نَقَلْتُ الْكِتَابَ إِلَى السَّرْيَانِيَةِ.

10 Above, p. 3.

وقول (*Radd*, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>) ثبت جميع ما احتجوا به من كتبهم بالسريانية  
 مار بالسريانية (*Dīn A*, fol. 38<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 77) السريانيين لمن أرادوا تفخيمه  
 فهذا في الكتب السريانية التي فسرها (*Dīn A*, fol. 38<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 77) هو الرب  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 45<sup>r</sup>) تفسير اللفظة السريانية (*Dīn A*, fol. 41<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 83) مارقوس  
 (*Dīn B*, p. 90) فإن القدوس في اللغة السريانية (*Dīn A*, fol. 51<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 103);  
 وأما السريانية فما (*Dīn A*, fol. 51<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 103) فإن الكتاب السرياني يكذبه  
 وزعم أن اسم النبي (*Dīn A*, fol. 53<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 108) تجاوزت قط بلد سوريا  
 الذي أخرجته من هذه النبوات ليس يلحقه النداء بالسريانية، فإن السرياني  
 فهذه شواهد كلها كافية على أن النداء (*Dīn A*, fol. 56<sup>v</sup> and *Dīn B*, p. 115);  
 بالسريانية لا يكون في أوله ياء كما في العربية (*Dīn A*, fol. 56<sup>v</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 114);  
 ويقال لمن أنكر ذلك وأراد تليسه: قل بالسريانية الحمد لله  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 57<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 115) فإن الألف زيادة في أسماء السريانيين  
 (*Dīn A*, fol. 61<sup>r</sup>, *Dīn B*, p. 123).

A linguistic feature to match this is that he frequently uses the active participle to express the present and future tenses, a characteristic feature of Syriac, especially when it is used with enclitic personal pronouns. He employs this stylistic feature in at least 22 places in these works.

*Al-radd 'alā l-Naṣārā:*

(fol. 3<sup>r</sup>). وأنا ذا كرأولا دين الإسلام.  
 (fol. 4<sup>v</sup>). التي أنا مفضّح لها ومبدي سرّها.  
 (fol. 7<sup>r</sup>). وأنا موضح فساد هذه الشريعة وتناقضها.  
 (fol. 25<sup>v</sup>). ما أنا مبينه لهم وكاشف الغطاء عن شريعتهم.  
 (fol. 29<sup>v</sup>). وتمسكوا بالمشكلات القليلة التي أنا مفسرها آخر كتابي هذا.  
 (fol. 31<sup>r</sup>). وها أنا ذا كر أربعة أوجه.

*Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla:*

مَّا أَنَا مُظْهِرُهُ وَمُبِيحُ سِرِّهِ وَكَاشِفُ سِتْرِهِ (Dīn A, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 2).

شَهَادَاتِ الْحَقِّ وَمُقْيَاسِ الْعِبَرِ الَّتِي أَنَا ذَا كَرِّهَا (Dīn A, fol. 6<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 9).

وَأَنَا مُلَخِّصُ ذَلِكَ بَابًا بِأَبًا وَمُسْتَشْهِدُ عَلَيْهِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ (Dīn A, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 13).

وَأَنَا مُطْلَقُ ذَلِكَ بِتَوْفِيقِ اللَّهِ (Dīn A, fol. 9<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 14).

وَمَعَهَا مَا أَنَا مُوَضِّحُهُ مِنْ نُبُوتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ (Dīn A, fol. 10<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 16).

وَأَنَا مُفَسِّرُ تِلْكَ الْخِصَالِ الْعَشْرِ (Dīn A, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, pp. 16–17).

فَإِنِّي ذَا كَرِّ مِنْهُ مَا يُسْتَدَلُّ بِهِ (Dīn A, fol. 12<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 20).

وَأَنَا ذَا كَرِّ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ (Dīn A, fol. 14<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 25).

وَأَنَا ذَا كَرِّ مِنْ فَضَائِلِهِمْ وَزُهْدِهِمْ وَتَوَرَّعِهِمْ (Dīn A, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 54).

تِلْكَ النُّبُوتِ الَّتِي أَنَا ذَا كَرِّهَا (Dīn A, fol. 33<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 67).

وَأَنَا مُوَضِّحُ ذَلِكَ فِي أَبْوَابِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ (Dīn A, fol. 34<sup>r</sup>, Dīn B, p. 68).

وَأَنَا مُفَسِّرُ ذَلِكَ فِي هَذَا الْبَابِ (Dīn A, fol. 34<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 68).

وَأَنَا ذَا كَرِّ مِمَّا بَقِيَ مِنْ نُبُوتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ (Dīn A, fol. 37<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 74).

فَأَمَّا مَا تَنَبَّأَ بِهِ الْمَسِيحُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَمَنْ بَعْدَهُ مِنْ حَوَارِيهِ فَإِنِّي ذَا كَرِّهِ (Dīn A, fol. 59<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 119).

وَإِنْ ذَكَرْتُ ذَا كَرِّ مِنْهُمْ (Dīn A, fol. 68<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 137).

وَأَنَا سَائِلُكُمْ—يُرْشِدُكُمْ—اللَّهُ فِي خَاتِمَةِ كِتَابِي هَذَا (Dīn A, fol. 71<sup>v</sup>, Dīn B, p. 143).

These features show an author deeply involved in Syrian Christianity, even though he had repudiated it, and so steeped in Syriac that it could well have been the language in which he still thought.



## *Al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, Introduction

The first of ‘Alī’s two works against Christianity, known by the generic title *Al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, is one of the earliest extant works of its kind. For its directness, acuteness of detail, and accuracy in presenting Christian beliefs, it has few parallels among extant Muslim works, and as far as can be told, it adopts an independence in its approach to its subject that sets it apart from other refutations of Christianity.

‘Alī wrote this work soon after he converted to Islam: as he says at the beginning, ‘The eternal One has called me to write this book of mine as a renunciation of the religion of Christianity’ (*li-l-tanaṣṣul min dīn al-Naṣrāniyya*).<sup>1</sup> Since he probably converted in or soon after 850, it can be dated to the early years of that decade, situating it among a few other extant refutations by Muslims active at this time.

Refutations of Christianity by Muslims characterised by their interests in speculative thinking on religion are known from the late eighth century onwards. The earliest was the lost *Kitāb al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* by Abū ‘Amr ʿĪrār ibn ‘Amr (d. c. 800), a Mu‘tazilī who is associated with the reputed founder of the school, Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā. Bishr ibn al-Mu‘tamir (d. 825), the founder of the Baghdad school of the Mu‘tazila, also wrote a work known by the title *Kitāb al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, while the founder of the Baṣra school, Abū l-Hudhayl al-‘Allāf (d. between 840 and 850), wrote both a work entitled *Kitāb ‘alā l-Naṣārā* and another entitled *Kitāb ‘alā ‘Ammār al-Naṣrānī fī l-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, quite probably against the Nestorian ‘Ammār al-Baṣrī, whom he may have known personally (it can only be surmised whether ‘Alī knew or knew of this Christian from the same denomination as himself). A refutation entitled *Kitāb fī l-radd ‘alā l-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā* is attributed to the Caliph al-Ma‘mūn (d. 833), while Abū Mūsā l-Murdār (d. 841), a pupil of Bishr ibn al-Mu‘tamir in Baghdad, wrote a work entitled *Kitāb al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* and also *Kitāb ‘alā Abī Qurra l-Naṣrānī*, against the early-ninth century Melkite bishop and apologist Theodore Abū Qurra. Probably nearer the time of ‘Alī’s conversion, the Mālikī legal scholar Muḥammad ibn Saḥnūn (d. 870) from Qayrawān wrote a work entitled *Kitāb al-ḥujja ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, and the Baghdad Mu‘tazilī Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad al-Iskāfī (d. 854) wrote a work entitled *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*.

All these refutations are lost and little is known about any of them. However, it is not unlikely that most will have dealt mainly or exclusively with the Chris-

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<sup>1</sup> Below pp. 62–63.

tian doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, which challenged the Islamic conception of God as an undifferentiated and incomparable unity, because they could be understood to mean that he was plural in his being and that he could come into proximity with a finite being. The kind of arguments that were used in some or maybe all of them can be seen in summarised form in the *Kitāb al-mughnī* of the tenth century Mu'tazilī 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī (d. 1025), where in his long refutation of the Trinity in Book 5 he often refers to 'our masters' (*shuyūkhunā*), Mu'tazilī scholars who preceded him and either included some of these early figures themselves or preserved arguments from them. If the traditions 'Abd al-Jabbār employs actually go back to the mid-ninth century, typical arguments that would have been used in these works tended to show that the Christian doctrines must lead to three gods as the divine Persons could be understood to subsist and act separately from one another, or to plurality within a single Godhead as the Persons, defined as attributes of the divine substance, must multiply beyond three.<sup>2</sup>

A few refutations from around the time of 'Alī's conversion have survived more or less intact, and these show the variety of approaches to refutation of Christianity taken by Muslims in the ninth century. The earliest is the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* of the Zaydī Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥasanī al-Rassī (d. 846), of which all but the ending (or what can be taken as the ending) has come down.<sup>3</sup> It is an admirable work, not only because it succeeds in encapsulating its arguments in short phrases of rhyming prose, but also because in its brief and concise examination it gives one of the most accurate and acute appraisals of Christian doctrines by any Muslim, taking into account not only the Christologies of the three main denominations, Melkites, Jacobites and Nestorians, but also points made by the Melkite Theodore Abū Qurra.<sup>4</sup> Put briefly, its structure comprises a rational proof that God is one and that the Qur'ān teaches this, an account and refutation of the Trinity and Incarnation, an argument that major figures in the Gospel themselves attest to the humanity of Jesus, and finally a translation of the early chapters of Matthew's Gospel (the original evidently contained more) to prove that there is nothing there that suggests Jesus was divine. Its elegantly expressed summaries of Christian beliefs and doctrinal variations and its expert translation of the Gospel chapters indicate that al-Qāsim was deeply acquainted with Christianity, possibly through first-hand

2 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, ed. and trans. D. Thomas, *Christian doctrines in Islamic theology*, Leiden, 2008, see pp. 219–220.

3 I. di Matteo (ed. and Italian trans.), 'Confutazione contro i Cristiani dello zaydita al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 9 (1921–1922) 301–364.

4 W. Madelung, 'Al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm and Christian theology', *Aram* 3 (1991) 35–44.

experience, and could present it with some detachment from polemical heat. In its mixture of rational arguments and biblical exegesis it is closest in character to 'Alī's *Radd* among the surviving ninth century works (although it bears no common features).

*Fī l-radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* of the Mu'tazilī Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 869) differs from this careful work in both character and approach. Written, as it relates, for some Muslims, presumably in Baghdad, being harassed by Christians who asked questions they could not answer, it presents a scathing condemnation of Christians under Islamic rule, together with a series of uncompromising attacks on Christian beliefs.<sup>5</sup> It has not survived in its complete original form but in a series of ten excerpts of differing lengths. In the longest of these, al-Jāḥiẓ shows why Christians have no right to make the claims they do about their intellectual heritage, and do not deserve the privileges they enjoy in Islamic society, for they are opportunists who have taken advantage of the indulgence shown them by Muslims, and their high social positions and influence are totally wrong. In other excerpts he takes up questions passed on from the Christians who are pestering his correspondents, and deals with other points raised in contemporary exchanges. His treatise provides a vivid account of Christians and Muslims in the society of his time, and even though it may exaggerate it provides a rare glimpse into the world from which the abstract arguments of other polemical works emerged. It bears little relation to 'Alī's *Radd*, even though it may well have been written only ten years before the time 'Alī converted.<sup>6</sup>

A third work from this period that again survives in incomplete form is the *Radd 'alā l-thalāth firaq min al-Naṣārā* by the one-time Mu'tazilī Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad al-Warrāq, who was active in the middle of the century. He suffered such criticisms for his religious views that he largely fell out of the historical record. His long and elaborate polemic has come down in the form of quotations included in the response made by the tenth-century Jacobite Christian Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī. It consists of three parts, a relatively brief description of Christian doctrines and the disagreements over these between the main denominations of Melkites, Jacobites and Nestorians, and two long, intricately detailed demonstrations of the actual and potential confusions of the explanations of first the Trinity and then the Incarnation offered by the three groups.<sup>7</sup>

5 Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ, *Fī l-radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, ed. J. Finkel in *Thalāth rasā'il li-Abī 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1962.

6 The work is often linked with the Caliph al-Mutawakkil, but see D. Thomas, 'Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ', in *CMR* 1, pp. 709–710, for arguments about an earlier date.

7 D. Thomas (ed.), *Anti-Christian polemic in early Islam, Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's 'Against the Trinity'*,

It shows an admirable awareness of the details in the doctrines it explores, and an acute understanding of what they say and aim to explain. So its counter arguments are all the more impressive, and they provided fertile material for Muslim polemicists for centuries after the name of Abū 'Īsā had been forgotten and his reputation obscured.<sup>8</sup>

Possibly the most impressive feature of this *Radd* is its use of simple common-sense logic and information obtained from Christians themselves, without recourse to scriptural arguments. Abū 'Īsā's objective stance gives his refutation a cogency and authority that for all the abstraction it contains profited later Muslims and compelled a Christian of the stature of Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī to reply. There is no sign in this *Radd* of any of the features of 'Alī al-Ṭabarī's roughly contemporary work.

These three works bear witness to the variety of approaches employed by Muslim polemicists as they addressed the differences between themselves and Christians. Obviously, they make hardly any reference to the Qur'ān because Christians would not be persuaded, and they are careful about the Bible because it is foreign territory—although al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm shows how effectively it can be used as long as it is studied thoroughly. For understandable reasons, they tend to prefer arguments based on common rational premises that their opponents are forced to acknowledge. Maybe the main point they prove is that at this time there does not appear to have been any set method of approaching Christians. While individual arguments may well have been known to many polemicists, each author seems to have used them in his own way, as though in response to live encounters with Christians that demanded repeated new initiatives and original solutions to fresh challenges. 'Alī's *Radd* is the product of his own individual response, and while it contains hints of arguments known also from other authors it is largely his own considered demonstration of defects that he must already have thought about for years before he finally abandoned the Christian faith that, in his view, glaringly held them in contradictory tension.

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Cambridge, 1992; D. Thomas (ed.), *Early Muslim polemic against Christianity, Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's 'Against the Incarnation'*, Cambridge, 2002.

8 Thomas, 'Against the Trinity', pp. 38–50; 'Against the Incarnation', pp. 75–82.

### The Contents and Structure of the *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*

It is difficult to believe that the many works known simply by the title *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* originally had no other names, though rarely are any others known. This seems to have been the case with ‘Alī’s work, because on the two occasions he refers to it in the *Dīn wa-dawla*, he simply calls it his ‘book on the refutation of the groups of Christians’ (*kitābī alladhī fī l-radd ‘alā aṣnāfal-Naṣārā*) and his ‘book of the refutation of the Christians’ (*kitāb al-radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*).<sup>9</sup> He had evidently not thought of any particular title other than this plain description. On the basis of the title of the work in which the thirteenth century Copt al-Ṣafī ibn al-‘Assāl replies to this refutation, *Kitāb al-ṣaḥā’ih fī jawāb al-naṣā’ih* (‘Truths in response to friendly advice’), Khalil Samir suggests that ‘Alī’s work was entitled *Kitāb al-naṣā’ih* (‘The book of friendly advice’).<sup>10</sup> This is attractive, and there is support for it at the beginning of the treatise, where in the second paragraph ‘Alī employs forms of the word three times. He explains that one reason for writing is to justify his conversion and give advice to Christians (*al-idhār wa-l-naṣīha*), he expresses the hope that the *Radd* will be in the form of advice to them (*‘alā ṭarīq al-naṣīha lahum*), and he comforts himself at the prospect of their indifference with the belief that he will gain the reward of a good and well-paid adviser (*ajr al-nāṣih al-ma’jūr*).<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, these mentions do not necessarily point to a title, and the absence of anything more colourful than *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* from ‘Alī’s two references in the *Dīn wa-dawla* argue against Samir’s suggestion. Maybe Ibn al-‘Assāl was drawing on these three allusions to *naṣīha* so near the beginning of the treatise when he was searching for a suitable alliterating and rhyming title for his own work that fitted into the literary conventions of his own time.

The *Radd* survives in a single manuscript that is evidently a late copy (Samir tentatively dates it to the seventeenth century).<sup>12</sup> The text was already incomplete in the version on which this is based because it tails off in the middle of folio 45<sup>r</sup> leaving the rest of the page blank, indicating that the copyist had reached the end of the version before him. This makes the full structure of the *Radd* difficult to work out for certain, though it is possible to make some suggestions on the basis of internal and external evidence.

‘Alī himself gives an outline of the intended structure of his argument at the beginning of the work. He lists the main elements as follows:

9 See below, pp. 362–363, 374–375.

10 Samir, ‘Réponse’, pp. 290–292, and see p. 286.

11 See below, pp. 64–65.

12 Samir, ‘Réponse’, p. 289.

- a summary of Islamic beliefs
- seven questions to Christians, 'the censuring silencers'
- further questions to support these
- seven instances of contradictions between the Gospel and the Creed
- the doctrines of the various Christian groups, the correct interpretations of the terms 'Fatherhood', 'Sonship' and 'indwelling' (*ḥulūl*) and a demonstration that the Christians use them incorrectly
- the words that Christians interpret contrary to their meaning, and the corruption (*taḥrīf*) and mistakenness in this<sup>13</sup>

He starts immediately after this with the summary of Christian beliefs.

Examination of the extant parts of the *Radd* shows readily that four of these six elements are fully treated, and the discussion of the correct meaning of the terms 'father' and 'son' has been fully developed to the point where 'Alī shows that they are used in Christian teachings without any fixed meanings. The only items that are not covered are the teaching about indwelling and mistaken Christian interpretations. This appears to suggest that whatever has been lost at the end is not very much: possibly a discussion about the meaning of Christian explanations of the Incarnation, some discussions about misinterpretations, and a conclusion. However, this may well not be the case. In the first place, the actual body of the treatise contains many more arguments than 'Alī's outline at the beginning suggests, and while the elements he lists at the beginning can all be identified in the flow of his arguments they are accompanied by many subsidiary points. So the lost concluding parts may have been rather longer and more complicated than at first appears.

This suspicion is supported by Ibn al-ʿAssāl. In his *Kitāb al-ṣaḥāʾih fī jawāb al-naṣāʾih* he comments in detail on the *Radd*, and as he does so he quotes brief extracts, usually no more than a sentence long. While it is impossible to calculate the length of the lost part on the basis of the number of these, because there is no way of knowing how interesting, offensive or wrong Ibn al-ʿAssāl found a point made in the last part of the *Radd* and how keen he was to respond to it in detail, the sheer variety of the issues in the passages he quotes points to a lost part of some reasonable length.<sup>14</sup> This means that 'Alī's

<sup>13</sup> See below, pp. 66–67.

<sup>14</sup> Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. 62, n. 212, believes it may represent a good half of the original: 'Le texte ci-dessus correspondrait à la moitié de l'ouvrage original, soit 45 pages sur 92 de la réponse de Safī', though this assumes that Ibn al-ʿAssāl takes his quotations evenly from throughout the *Radd*.

initial outline of the main points in the *Radd* can be taken as only a general guide to its actual contents.

The extant parts only conform to a very rough order, so it may be expected that the missing parts were little different. Checking through al-Ṣafī's quotations,<sup>15</sup> the following themes may be identified:

- the Incarnation of Christ: questions about the uniting of the divine and human characters; the ineffectiveness of the death of Jesus in overcoming evil
- the miracles of Christ: their questionability as signs of Jesus's divinity; they do not prove that there was a qualitative distinction between Jesus and other prophets
- further questions about the divinity of Jesus: if he was God, why did he not destroy sin; why did he not destroy his enemies; how could he have destroyed death when he was destroyed by death?
- Christians have added to the original teachings: they innovate in their observances; Paul and later church leaders issued curses
- verses from the Gospels have been misinterpreted or are confused: John 3:13, John 8:58, Matthew 1:1, John 1:14
- The Gospels contradict one another in several places

These can be collected under the two headings of: the indwelling of the divine in the human Christ; and the misinterpretation of words and verses in Christian scripture. But there appears to be more besides.

It is worth commenting a little more on these lost parts, because they shed important light on the *Radd* as a whole and on 'Alī's thinking about the nature of Christianity, as well as on 'Alī himself.

The first theme, on the mode of the indwelling of the divine in the human at the Incarnation, indicates that 'Alī was engaged in similar forms of thinking about this doctrine as other Muslims of his time. His question at the beginning of the list of quotations, 'So in which of these ways did God take a son?',<sup>16</sup> shows that he has just presented a series of alternative possibilities, such as adoption, in addition to eternal generation. In fact, his use of the qur'ānic phrase *ittakhadha Allāh ibnan* (e.g. Q 2:116, 10:68: *ittakhadha Allāh waladan*) raises the possibility that he may have been referring to a question from Christians that is quoted and discussed by al-Jāḥiẓ at about this time and is repeated by theolo-

15 Below, pp. 160–169.

16 Below, pp. 160–161.

gians for a century or more afterwards. In this question, an anonymous group of Christians compare God 'taking' a son in the sense of adopting and honouring a human, with God taking Abraham as 'close friend', as the Qur'ān says (*wa-ittakhadha Allāh Ibrāhīma khalīlan*; Q 4:125).<sup>17</sup> They see a similarity in the intimacy of an adoptive sonship and a close relationship, and try to compel Muslims to accept the one at the risk of denying the other and thereby rejecting the Qur'ān. This is an attractive possibility, and it would show how fully aware 'Alī was of the discussions that were going on around him, though since al-Ṣafī says nothing at all about the context of what is only a brief quotation, it must remain no more than a possibility.

The fragmentary quotations that follow suggest that 'Alī entered into a technical theological discussion about the Incarnation, and that again he may have raised issues known from contemporary refutations of Christianity, albeit in his own way. The four extremely brief quotations, 'That Christ was five hypostases', 'What if [the Christians] claim that [they] call one of the locations divine?', 'indwelling of the Divinity alone' (*maḥall li-l-ilāh dūna ba'd*), and 'he was existent in all of them without modality', are related to the uniting of the divinity and humanity in Christ. The five hypostases would appear to be the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as God acting as a single being, and from what Ibn al-'Assāl says, the human nature of Christ made up of his body and spirit, while the questions about the location of the Divine appear to relate to the problem of the Divinity singling out this particular human from others, for if the only evidence of Christ's divinity is his miracles, there is no reason to single him out from other prophets whose miracles are equally impressive. If this is the drift of 'Alī's argument here, he is referring back to the comparisons of Jesus's and other prophets' miracles he has made earlier (in the extant parts of the work), and also leading up to the theoretical question that Ibn al-'Assāl quotes a little later: 'Why did he not manifest miracles that were greater than the miracles of the prophets?'

That these issues were known in 'Alī's time is attested by his contemporary Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq, who discusses the problem of only one of the three Persons of the Trinity uniting with the human Christ,<sup>18</sup> and alludes, though only in passing, to the problem of Christ's miracles showing no qualitative distinction between him and other prophets.<sup>19</sup> Other authors must also have discussed them, and presumably at length, because by the tenth century they had become

17 Al-Jāhīz, *Radd*, p. 25.

18 Abū 'Īsā, *Radd*, in Thomas, *Incarnation*, pp. 96–107.

19 Abū 'Īsā, *Radd*, in Thomas, *Incarnation*, pp. 170–171.



integral elements in the refutations of Christianity that appear in the major theological treatises that date from this time.

Another aspect of these lost parts that is worth commenting on is the mistakes and contradictions 'Alī detects in Christian scripture. He has already demonstrated in the intact part of the *Radd* his extensive knowledge of the text of the Gospels, and here he uses his knowledge of the Bible, and presumably the tradition of Christian exegesis, to impressive effect.

He shows the extent to which his outlook has already changed from that of a believing Christian when he suggests that Jesus's statement in John 8:58, 'Before Abraham was I am', should, in fact, be a question.<sup>20</sup> As a statement, Jesus' words form a powerful affirmation of his eternal existence, but as a presumably rhetorical question they imply strongly that he denied completely any association with eternity. Turning the statement into a question is an eloquent indication of the changes in 'Alī's perceptions of faith as he moved from Christianity to Islam.

He goes on to identify other instances where there are mistakes in the historical Gospels: John could not have written 'The Word became flesh' because this would mean that the eternal God changed into contingent material substance, which is illogical; the Gospels disagree over details—the miracles performed by Jesus; the actual time of Jesus's resurrection; and the attitude of the two thieves crucified with Jesus, Matthew saying that they both mocked him (27:44), Luke that one rebuked the other for doing this (23:39–41), John that they said nothing (19:18), and Mark remaining silent (15:27, though see 15:32, where both of them taunt Jesus). Maybe his most impressive demonstration of biblical knowledge in these fragmentary parts is his identification of the contradiction between Jesus's reference to David taking the bread of the presence in the time of the priest Abiathar (Mark 2:26) and the record in the Old Testament of this occurring in the time of Abiathar's father Abimelech (1 Samuel 21:1–6).

This last example causes one to wonder whether here, and maybe in other instances, 'Alī was deploying knowledge that he had acquired when he was

20 These words occasioned comment from a number of later Muslim polemicists, though none followed 'Alī in making this ingenious suggestion: see al-Bāqillānī, *Kitāb al-tamhīd*, in Thomas, *Christian doctrines*, pp. 200–201; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbūt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, ed. and trans. G.S. Reynolds and S.K. Samir, *'Abd al-Jabbār, critique of Christian origins*, Provo, 2010, pp. 36, 40; the work attributed to al-Ghazālī, *Al-radd al-jamīl li-ilahīyyat 'Isā bi-ṣarīḥ al-Injīl*, ed. and trans. R. Chidiac, *Réfutation excellente de la divinité de Jésus Christ d'après les évangiles*, Paris, 1939, pp. 53–54.

much younger, of biblical cruxes that were familiar within Christian circles and formed the subjects of frequent attempts at resolution.<sup>21</sup> They are inconsistencies, and for him they have become instances of alteration to the original text, although in the surviving quotations 'Alī does not draw attention to this matter as a pervasive theological problem.

The long sequence of fragmentary quotations quoted by Ibn al-'Assāl preserves a valuable outline of the lost parts of the *Radd*. It is possible that other works that incorporate elements from it also preserve quotations from the lost parts, or at least allusions, though as will be shown below, their use nowhere approaches the systematic analysis in Ibn al-'Assāl's *Ṣaḥā'ih*. So, apart from a few references that can be checked against him, such as the reminiscence of the contradictory accounts of the crucified thieves' attitudes to Jesus found in the fifteenth century Iberian convert known as 'Abd Allāh al-Tarjumān,<sup>22</sup> there is nothing on which to build further elements of the lost latter sections of the work.

It would appear, then, that the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* originally comprised six parts, conforming to the description that 'Alī gives at the beginning. But while there is relatively clear organisation in the first four parts, comprising the summary of Islamic beliefs, the seven 'censuring silencers', the further questions that support these, and the seven instances of contradictions between the Gospel and the Creed, the structure of the latter two parts is less clear. There is no obvious reason for this (unless Ibn al-'Assāl has obscured the progression of arguments), though it may be connected with material that 'Alī was using from elsewhere.

'Alī's general stance throughout the *Radd* is that Christian doctrines conform to neither reason nor revelation. In various places he shows how they are either self-contradictory or logically incoherent, and he supports his arguments with incisive proofs that the doctrines cannot be brought into agreement with the biblical witness. He is not a theologian in the same sense as the Muslim masters who at this time took Christian doctrines and subjected them to detailed forensic deconstructions that left them in logical tatters,<sup>23</sup> and rather than picking a doctrine apart with instruments of reason his preference is evidently

21 This impression is supported by 'Alī's locating of the incident involving David and Abimelech in 'the Books of Kings' (see below, pp. 166–167) and not 1 Samuel. This suggests he was drawing it from his memory rather than a recent check of the Bible.

22 M. de Epalza (ed. and trans.), *La tuhfā, autobiografía y polémica islámica contra el Cristianismo de 'Abdallāh al-Tarjūmān (fray Anselmo Turmeda)*, Rome, 1971, pp. 412–415.

23 Among these can be cited Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq and the 'masters' whose arguments 'Abd al-Jabbār employs at various points in the *Mughnī*.

to expose the incompatibility of Christian teaching and revelation by citing a verse, mainly from the Gospels, that shows the doctrine bears no relationship to it.

This raises the question of ‘Alī’s attitude towards the Bible. At the time he was writing, stories were in circulation among Muslims that explained the discrepancies between the original *Injīl* that the Qur’ān said Jesus had proclaimed from God and the four Gospels in the possession of Christians. Al-Jāḥiẓ, for example, relates how after Jesus had disappeared and his message was lost, four men attempted to reconstruct it, though not all of these had been his immediate companions, and there could be no guarantee that they did not conspire together to present a distorted message.<sup>24</sup> ‘Alī says nothing that remotely echoes such an explicit accusation of textual corruption, and nothing explicit about the authenticity of the Bible, though his repeated use of the Gospels and Torah against Christian beliefs appears to indicate that he accepts them as textually intact, against the distortions imported into them by Christian interpretations. This inference is supported by the declarations he makes from time to time, for example in his words in the first of the ‘censuring silencers’, where, following quotations from Matthew and John in which Jesus affirms that he is inferior to God, ‘Alī declares, ‘This is the pure, clear declaration of God’s oneness, and the acknowledgement that [Jesus] was sent. This is the faith of Christ and all the prophets.’<sup>25</sup> Here he appears to be accepting these two verses as an authentic witness from the original *Injīl*.

In the light of such comments, ‘Alī’s words near the beginning of the *Radd*, where he says ‘My intention is not to refute Christ or the people of the truth, but those Christian sects that oppose Christ and the Gospels and corrupt the words (*wa-ḥarrafā l-kalimāt*)’, are most naturally understood as implying distortion of the meaning rather than of the actual text of the Gospels, which he does not wish to doubt. This is further supported a little later in the *Radd*, where in his explanation of what he intends to do he says that he will ‘interpret the words which they explain in contradiction to their meanings, and refer to the corruption and falseness (*al-taḥrīf wa-l-fasād*) implicated in this’.<sup>26</sup> Corruption in the Bible is a matter of Christian misinterpretation rather than disruption of the actual text.

Despite these explanations, in the latter parts of the *Radd* a different attitude towards Christian scripture is implied. For when ‘Alī actually comes to exam-

24 Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Radd*, p. 24.

25 See below, pp. 70–71.

26 See below, pp. 66–67.

ine what in this opening description he calls explanations in contradiction to the meaning of the text, he exposes direct disagreements between one verse and another. For example, on the one hand Joseph the husband of Mary is told in the Gospel of Matthew that Mary's child will be born of the Holy Spirit, but then John the Baptist later witnesses the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus when he is baptised as a young man. 'Alī asks, 'If Christ himself was as the angel said, what is the meaning of the descent of the Holy Spirit on him a second time?'<sup>27</sup> He does not pursue the matter further, though he has clearly recognised the internal disagreement and presumably its implication for the integrity of the Gospels. This does not prevent him mentioning other instances, particularly in the parts preserved by Ibn al-'Assāl, where he refers to contradictions between the original text of a Psalm and Paul's quotation from it, and to Jesus's reference to David meeting the priest Abiathar whereas the original names him Abimelech.<sup>28</sup> But he does not pursue the implied contradictions further or address the problem of the integrity of the Bible directly. It could be that he recognises the difficulty this would raise for his arguments elsewhere in the *Radd*, or maybe that he wishes to see traces of original truth in his former faith, even though its contemporary adherents have abandoned it. If it is his task to call them back to it, he might wish to see a core of truth preserved.

### The Problem of the Sources of the *Radd*

'Alī gives almost no hints at all about any possible sources he may have used. Indeed, a number of features of the *Radd* suggest that he was largely, if not entirely, relying on his own knowledge and experience. Furthermore, in the absence of all except a small handful of other anti-Christian works from this period, it is extremely difficult to know whether he was drawing on any individual author or on any common tradition of arguments. There are a few possible indications, though little that is definite.

The first of these is the use of biblical proofs to counter Christian claims for the divinity of Jesus that are found in many parts of the *Radd*. It is one of 'Alī's favourite arguments: a quotation or sequence of quotations to show that Jesus was identical with other humans and therefore could not be divine. This motif from throughout the work recalls a similar argument presented by the Zaydī Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī (d. 846) in his *Kitāb al-radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*,

<sup>27</sup> See below, pp. 136–137.

<sup>28</sup> See below, pp. 166–167.

which dates from before 826.<sup>29</sup> At one point in this work (like 'Alī's, it has not survived in full) he argues that Jesus cannot be divine because the witnesses of figures from the Gospels, all of whose words he quotes, attest to his humanity.<sup>30</sup> Although this work predates 'Alī's by about a quarter of a century, there is no indication that 'Alī knew or used it. But what is noteworthy is the use in both their refutations of their opponents' scripture to neutralise their own doctrines. It is a reasonably obvious ploy, of course, though its appearance in both works may just suggest that it was a widely accepted procedure among Muslims who knew the Bible.

A rather less tenuous instance of possible borrowing of a common motif is 'Alī's proof that Jesus was not divine based on a comparison of his miracles with those of other prophets. This takes up a substantial part of the *Radd*,<sup>31</sup> and it stands as the earliest known instance in a long line of such comparisons that continued for at least 500 years in Muslim polemical works.<sup>32</sup> Significantly, it stands almost alone, because hardly any later comparison copies it (the one exception is 'Abd Allāh al-Tarjumān),<sup>33</sup> as though it was almost unknown in later times.

The whole issue of parallel miracles was evidently common knowledge in 'Alī's time. For one thing, the former Mu'tazilī Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq alludes briefly to it in his *Radd 'alā l-thalāth firaq min al-Naṣārā*, arguing that if Christians understand the act of uniting between the divine and human natures in Jesus in terms of the indwelling God directing human affairs by means of him, and hence of manifesting miracles through him, then it must follow that God also united with other prophets, because he also manifested miracles through them.<sup>34</sup> And for another, Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiẓ, in the reply he wrote to the group of Muslims who appealed to him for help against their Christian harassers, alludes to the Christian opponents of his correspondents mocking the qur'ānic miracle of Jesus speaking as a baby in the cradle (Q 19:28–33) by expressing regret that it is not attested in any other source, since it is greater than Jesus's other miracles of reviving the dead, walking on the water and so on, which other prophets also performed.<sup>35</sup>

29 W. Madelung, 'Al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm', in *CMR* 1, pp. 540–543.

30 Al-Qāsim, *Radd*, pp. 24–25.

31 See below, pp. 142–151.

32 For discussion on some of these, see D. Thomas, 'The miracles of Jesus in early Islamic polemic', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 39 (1994) 221–243.

33 Epalza, *La tuḥfa*, pp. 339–347.

34 Abū 'Īsā, *Radd*, in Thomas, *Incarnation*, pp. 170–171, and see also pp. 178–179.

35 Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Radd*, p. 12.

Neither of these authors gives any details about actual miracles performed by other prophets in the way that 'Alī does. The first Muslim who actually cites examples of miracles performed by other prophets to parallel those of Jesus is the author of the correspondence attributed to the Byzantine Emperor Leo III and the Umayyad Caliph 'Umar II. If their letters are genuine, they must date to the early eighth century, though there has been considerable debate about their precise dating and authorship. The correspondence has been placed by some at the end of the ninth century, therefore some decades after 'Alī's *Radd*,<sup>36</sup> though an earlier date is now generally favoured, maybe as early as the eighth century.<sup>37</sup> For questions of comparison with 'Alī, this is not a matter of urgent importance, because, despite the suggestion of J.M. Gaudeul,<sup>38</sup> the miracles that are adduced in the letter attributed to 'Umar do not appear to have a direct relationship with any given by 'Alī. 'Umar' cites the following: Adam was created without parents ('Alī also cites this); Ezekiel revived 35,000 men from the dead; Elijah revived the widow's son ('Alī also cites this); Moses's staff turned into a serpent and swallowed up the staffs of Pharaoh's magicians; Moses walked with this staff, struck the sea with it and it opened, and struck the rock with it and it produced water ('Alī cites the miracles of striking the sea and the rock); Moses provided shade for the Israelites in the wilderness, light for them when it was dark, and birds for them to eat.<sup>39</sup> While a few of these miracles are common to 'Umar' and 'Alī, most of these are all to be found in the Qur'ān, and from 'Umar's' choice of the Qur'ānic verb form *iltaqafat* ('it swallowed up'; Q 26:45: *talqafu*) to describe Moses's staff swallowing the magicians', against 'Alī's synonym *ibtala'at*, it would appear that he was using the Qur'ān directly. The difference in other miracles, added to the fact that 'Alī cites further miracles that 'Umar' does not, argues against either direct dependence or a common source other than the Qur'ān.

The same applies to other instances of miracles comparisons that date from this general period. From the tenth century, the theologians Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 944), al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb (active mid-tenth century) and Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) all include comparisons in their arguments against the divinity of Christ that bear sufficient resemblance to one another to suggest that they were each independently drawing on the same source,<sup>40</sup> which has few similarities to 'Alī. All three appear to attest to a tradition of miracles

36 J.M. Gaudeul, *La correspondance de 'Umar et Leon (vers 900)*, Rome, 1985.

37 T. Greenwood, 'The Letter of Leo III in Ghewond', in *CMR* I, pp. 203–206.

38 Gaudeul, *Correspondence*, p. 128 and n. 32.

39 Gaudeul, *Correspondence*, pp. iii–iv.

40 Thomas, 'Miracles of Jesus', pp. 227–232.

comparisons that shows no awareness of ʿAlī and which he does not know, and the necessary inference is that there were more than one set in circulation at the time he was writing. It is as though, like other Muslims who were possibly also converts from Christianity, he knew about Christian accusations that claims about Muḥammad's prophethood were not supported by miracles, and responded by exposing the concealed fallacy, because Jesus's own miracles were not sufficiently distinctive to prove he was different from other prophets. ʿAlī was thus part of a tradition, though not reliant on other known members of it.

The one probable source of arguments employed in the *Radd* is the tradition of scriptural interpretation and debate within Christianity itself. Many of the contradictions within the Gospels that ʿAlī attacks are likely to have been the subjects of keen debate within ʿAlī's own former denomination and others, simply because enquiring minds sought answers. This is attested by ʿAlī's single reference to an interpretation given by the person he calls by the Syriac title *al-mefashqān* ('the exegete'), who attempts to harmonise the incident that occurs in the middle of Jesus's ministry, in which the disciples of John the Baptist come to ask him who he is (Matthew 11:2–19), with the incident at Jesus's baptism when the heavenly voice announces in John's presence that he is the Son of God (Matthew 3:16–17). As ʿAlī explains, the exegete, who must be the early fifth century biblical interpreter Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), a great authority within the Nestorian Church in which ʿAlī had been brought up,<sup>41</sup> tries to say that John knew who Jesus was all the time and sent his disciples on this occasion in order to satisfy their questions. ʿAlī refuses to accept this, and retorts that John's disciples would surely have accepted what he told them and would not have needed to hear an explanation directly from Jesus.

Theodore is known to have written a commentary on Matthew (as well as on the other Gospels), and although this has been lost, a surviving fragment does indeed give the explanation to which ʿAlī alludes here.<sup>42</sup> This evidence shows beyond doubt that at this point ʿAlī was engaging with the teachings of his ancestral church and using them as material with which to expose the contradictions he found so ridiculous. It raises the possibility that he did the same at other points in the *Radd*, and may well have been repeating objections and problems that would be well-known to Nestorians and

41 Gaudeul, *Riposte*, pp. v–vi, points out that the version of the Nicene Creed given at the opening of the *Radd* is close to the one attributed to this theologian.

42 See J. Reuss, *Matthäus-kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, Berlin, 1957, p. 115, fragment 57, commentary on Matthew 11:2–3.

other Christians of his day, though they were not so perturbed as to find them a reason to abandon their faith.

This instance also affords a possible insight into the process by which 'Alī had loosened his ties with Christianity. For it is overwhelmingly probable that he must have known of this problem of consistency for many years, and had not found the explanation offered by the great Christian teacher acceptable. It would cause him to wonder about the consistency of the Gospel texts, and would sow seeds of doubt in his mind about the basis of Christian belief. If such problems were not themselves the fundamental cause of his departure from Christianity to Islam, they must have been substantial contributory factors.

From the little that can be gleaned from the *Radd*, as explained here, it appears 'Alī was writing it in order to express his own personal objections to Christianity, and he made little use of whatever Muslim sources were available. He was fully aware of the main framework of Muslim criticisms of Christianity, chiefly that Christians did not pay proper respect to their own scriptures in constructing their doctrines, and therefore incorporated into their beliefs all manner of contradictions to what scripture taught, about both God and Jesus. But his approach to proving this is entirely his own, derived, it appears, from long reflection on the contents of the Bible and Christian doctrines, and given almost as a personal testimony to his disenchantment with the faith.

'Alī's attitude towards Christian scripture itself is not entirely clear. On the one hand, he appears to find it reliable enough to make copious use of it in his demonstrations (though he could simply be employing it against people who would accept it, without himself acknowledging it). But on the other hand, he is aware of its shortcomings, not least the discrepancies between the two apparently contradictory actions of John the Baptist, and the handful of ambiguous verses he blames Christians for using to defend the divinity of Christ, in defiance of the many more verses that affirm his humanity. He does not seem to be concerned about the question of the corruption of the Bible as such, although his mind is fully made up about the complete inadequacy of the interpretations given to it by Christians.

### **The *Radd* and Later Muslim Polemical Works**

The career of the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* in the centuries after it was written is strange. For while it was known to both Christians and Muslims, it was not answered by any Christian before al-Ṣafī ibn al-'Assāl in the thirteenth century, and it was probably only ever used as a direct source by Muslims who had themselves converted from Christianity.



The earliest work in which traces of the *Radd* are detectable is the letter written to his brother by a certain al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, following his conversion from Christianity to Islam. Virtually nothing is known about this individual, though since he is mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm in the *Fihrist*, which dates to about 990, he must have been active before this time. Indications in his letter suggest that he knew some of the same sources as the tenth century scholars al-Māturīdī (d. 944) and al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013),<sup>43</sup> and that he was well acquainted with Mu'tazilī thinking.<sup>44</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm actually lists him among 'the Mu'tazila about whom nothing is known',<sup>45</sup> while Ibn Taymiyya many centuries later calls him one of the great Christian scholars, though since he makes extensive use of al-Ḥasan's work in his *Al-jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ li-man baddala dīn al-Masīḥ* he might be expected to attribute such a status to him.<sup>46</sup> It is thanks to Ibn Taymiyya that his letter survives, because apart from extensive quotations of it in the *Jawāb* there is no other extant text of the work. It is known simply as *Al-radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, or *Risāla ilā akhihi 'Alī ibn Ayyūb*.

In the parts that survive, al-Ḥasan shows clear awareness of 'Alī al-Ṭabarī's *Radd*, most obviously in his quotation of the form of the Christian Creed given by 'Alī and the arguments related to it.<sup>47</sup> Elsewhere, some of his quotations from the Gospels are also in the same form as 'Alī's. But he is by no means a slavish borrower from the earlier convert, and when, for example, he gives his own comparison of the miracles of Jesus and other prophets he does not employ 'Alī but instead what appears to be a lost source that was also shared by al-Māturīdī and al-Bāqillānī.<sup>48</sup> He was evidently selective in his treatment, and in his omission of the great majority of 'Alī's arguments he may well have been intimating that their impact was minimal, possibly on a Muslim audience who would neither know about the minutiae of Christian theology nor be interested in them, and even on a Christian audience who would not be persuaded by the literalism on which many of them relied for their impact.

It has been argued that another Muslim who made use of 'Alī's *Radd* in the tenth century was the Mu'tazilī theologian 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 1025). In his *Tathbīt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, which he completed in 995, he refers to Christian converts to Islam who had examined the passages that Christians claim had been used by Christ, and either said they were not aware that Christ had

43 See Thomas, 'Miracles', pp. 230–232.

44 F. Sepmeijer, *Een weerlegging van het Christendom uit de 10e eeuw*, Kampen, 1985, pp. 20–21.

45 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, ed. M. Riḍā-Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971, p. 221.

46 Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ li-man baddala dīn al-Masīḥ*, Cairo, 1905, vol. 3, p. 2.

47 Ibn Taymiyya, *Jawāb*, vol. 2, pp. 321–330.

48 See Thomas, 'Miracles', pp. 227–232.

used them or thought that the passages could be explained metaphorically. S.M. Stern sees here an allusion to 'Alī's claim in the *Radd* that he had found in the New Testament twenty thousand verses confirming the humanity of Jesus and only a few ambiguous verses pointing to his divinity, although Christians preferred the few over the many.<sup>49</sup> Of course, the sentiment is the same, though there is not enough in 'Abd al-Jabbār's remark to prove he was basing what he says directly on 'Alī himself, rather than on general opinions he encountered. Stern clearly thought that this was convincing evidence, and stated as much in a slightly later article.<sup>50</sup> Admittedly, there is an affinity between some details in the two works. Among the fragments from the lost second part of the *Radd* preserved by Ibn al-'Assāl (which Stern does not mention) there are references to a number of observances followed in the Church of the East, the Fast of Nineveh and the Fast of the Virgins, and also a ban on eating pigeon because the Holy Spirit appeared as a dove.<sup>51</sup> These also appear in the *Tathbīt*, with the minor alteration in the latter to a ban on chicken.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, they are relatively minor details, and the absence from the *Tathbīt* of any of the main arguments in the *Radd*, or indeed of any further details, tends to weigh against the probability of direct dependence.

In the *Tathbīt* 'Abd al-Jabbār also gives two quotations from the Gospel of John, 6:38 and 8:40, that are close enough to equivalents given by 'Alī to cause Sepmeijer to see a connection between the *Tathbīt* and the *Radd*.<sup>53</sup> But since these quotations in the *Tathbīt* occur together while in the *Radd* they are widely separate, and also they are the only readily identifiable duplicate quotations from the *Radd* in the *Tathbīt*, an alternative explanation, maybe that the verses were part of a common stock, seems more likely than direct borrowing.

Al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb's letter was used about a century after it was written by another convert from Christianity to Islam, Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā (d. late 12th century, probably 1193), a doctor and possibly identical with Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd from Baṣra.<sup>54</sup> His *Al-naṣiḥa l-īmāniyya fī faḍīḥat millat al-Naṣrāniyya* is

49 S.M. Stern, 'Quotations from apocryphal Gospels in 'Abd al-Jabbār', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, new series 18 (1967) 34–57, pp. 36–37, and below, pp. 122–125. Reynolds and Samir, *'Abd al-Jabbār, critique of Christian origins*, p. 40, make no comment about this point.

50 S.M. Stern, 'Abd al-Jabbār's account of how Christ's religion was falsified by the adoption of Roman customs', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, new series 19 (1968) 128–185, p. 129.

51 Below, pp. 164–165.

52 *Tathbīt*, pp. 87, 127.

53 Sepmeijer, *Een weerlegging*, p. 24. The two quotations, in Reynolds and Samir, *'Abd al-Jabbār*, p. 33, and below pp. 72–73 and 94–95, are virtually identical in wording.

54 See *CMR* 3, p. 750.

modelled on al-Ḥasan's letter, so much so that Floris Sepmeijer has claimed the earlier convert's letter can be extensively reconstructed with its help,<sup>55</sup> though this has been disputed.<sup>56</sup> What is significant is that elements of ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī's *Radd* have been taken into this work via al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb and continued to be part of the Muslim tradition of polemic, though still only among converts.

Yet another convert who made use of ‘Alī's work is the Majorcan who took the name ‘Abd Allāh al-Tarjumān. Born in Palma in about 1352 as Anselmo Turmeda, this Christian became a Franciscan friar in 1379, and then not many years later he converted to Islam following a public disputation about the identity of the Paraclete, promised by Jesus in John's Gospel. He went to Tunis and remained there for the rest of his life, working as a translator. He died between 1424 and 1430.

‘Abd Allāh's best known work is *Tuhfat al-adīb fī l-radd ‘alā ahl al-ṣalīb*, the third part of which is a refutation of Christianity. It is in the long series of arguments here that a number of borrowings from ‘Alī's *Radd* appear, though without reference to their source. The most obvious is the comparison of the miracles of Jesus and those of other prophets, which shows very close similarities, including a list of the ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians in the Bible, as opposed to the nine ‘signs’ given in the Qur’ān (17:101),<sup>57</sup> though almost as conspicuous is ‘Alī's translation of the Nicene Creed,<sup>58</sup> and also his exposure of the discrepancies between the accounts in the Gospels of Matthew (27:44), Luke (23:39–43) and John (19:18) of the thieves crucified with Jesus, where one Gospel describes them both reviling him, the other describes how the first thief rebukes the second for his taunts and receives Jesus's promise of paradise, and the third makes no mention of words passing between them.<sup>59</sup> This last instance of borrowing, which is from the now lost latter part of the *Radd*, shows that the whole work must have been available to ‘Abd Allāh in Tunis in the mid-fifteenth century.

Like al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, ‘Abd Allāh al-Tarjumān appears to have been selective in his use of ‘Alī's *Radd*, and he quite clearly does not follow it closely, again suggesting that he did not consider the majority of its arguments convincing

55 Sepmeijer, *Een weerlegging*, pp. 1–3.

56 M. Accad, ‘The Gospels in the Muslim and Christian exegetical discourse from the eighth to the fourteenth century’, PhD diss. University of Oxford, 2001, pp. 36–40.

57 Epalza, *La tuhfā*, pp. 339–347; below, pp. 145–147.

58 Epalza, *La tuhfā*, pp. 369–371; below, pp. 114–115.

59 Epalza, *La tuhfā*, pp. 412–415; below, pp. 166–167. Interestingly, ‘Abd Allāh does not refer to Mark, who according to ‘Alī does not mention the thieves. This is maybe because he knew ‘Alī was mistaken here, having ignored the reference in Mark 15:32.

or telling for the audience he had in mind. It is possible that closer comparison between the two works will reveal more extensive borrowings,<sup>60</sup> though the fact that the more easily detectable borrowings are to be found at quite separate points in 'Abd Allāh's work, and in a different order from their original order in 'Alī's *Radd*, gives a clear hint that the later convert was employing the earlier work without respect for its integrity.

Apart from these relatively meagre borrowings, it seems that 'Alī's *Radd 'alā al-Naṣārā* was not widely used by Muslim polemicists; its survival in a single copy of a truncated version also attests to this. Maybe the density of its detail and the over-technical nature of its arguments simply had no appeal. These could have been collected over many years by a man whose objections to his family's faith were gradually coming to outweigh his reasons for continuing to believe. They perhaps attest more to a personal journey of loosening ties of allegiance than to the polemical approach that would appeal to a wide audience. So they were in large part neglected, and finally more or less forgotten.

The single manuscript in which the *Radd* is now preserved was discovered in Istanbul in 1934 by Maurice Bouyges,<sup>61</sup> who had written scathingly about the authenticity of 'Alī's *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*. It tails off in the middle of folio 45<sup>r</sup>, which shows that it is a copy of an earlier version that was evidently incomplete. The text was published in 1959 by I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch in an edition that is generally regarded as unsatisfactory. As has been explained above, some idea of the lost continuation of the text can be gained from the reply made by the Copt al-Ṣafī ibn al-'Assāl in the mid-13th century.

The following abbreviations are used in the edition below:

- A MS Istanbul, Şehid Ali Paşa Library, 1628.
- B I.-A. Khalifé and W. Kutsch, 'Ar-radd 'alā-n-Naṣārā de 'Alī aṭ-Ṭabarī', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph* 26 (1959) 115–148.
- C Al-Ṣafī ibn al-'Assāl, *Kitāb al-ṣaḥā'ih fī jawāb al-naṣā'ih*, ed. Murqus Jirjis, Cairo, 1926/27 (the incomplete text of the Istanbul manuscript corresponds with the quotations from the *Radd* given in this work until near the end of chapter 9, p. 80).

60 Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. xi, n. 13.

61 M. Bouyges, 'Aliy ibn Rabban aṭ-Ṭabariy', *Der Islam* 22 (1935) 120–121.

الردّ على النصارى

The Refutation of the Christians

::

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، وما توفيقى إلا بالله.

قال الفقير إلى الله الراجي عفوه ومغفرته، علي بن ربّ المهتدى<sup>1</sup>: الحمد لله ربّ العالمين وصلواته على أنبيائه أجمعين وآلهم الطيبين الطاهرين، وذريّتهم تترأ<sup>2</sup> إلى يوم الدين، وهو حسبي يوم الدين.

أمّا بعد فإنّ من شأن كلّ ذي دين أن يفَضِّل دينه [ولا]<sup>3</sup> يحبّ ديناً غيره. ولا سبيل إلى معرفة الأفضل من الأرذل<sup>4</sup> إلاّ بالاختبار<sup>5</sup>، ولا يكون الاختبار إلاّ بالعقل. ولولا العقل<sup>6</sup> لما عُرِف أنّ لنا صانعاً<sup>7</sup> وأنّه إله واحد فرد صمد قديم أزليّ، وأنّه غلوب وهوب، ومن لم يستعمل العقل جهل، ومن جهل فقد ضلّ، ومن ضلّ فقد كفر. ولقد دعاني القديم من ذلك إلى أن ألّفت كتابي هذا للتّنصّل<sup>8</sup> من دين النصرانية، والإعذار<sup>9</sup> والنصيحة للنصارى كافّة، ولئلا يقول قائل منهم أو من غيرهم إنّي إنّما تركت دين النصرانية الذي كنت عليه من أوّل<sup>10</sup> عمري إلى أن بلغت من العمر سبعين<sup>11</sup> سنة ورغبت في دين الإسلام الحنيفي كي أبيع دنيا بدين، أو سروراً بغرور.

<sup>1</sup>these words are added in the margin in A. The words ربّ بن بان may be an attempt by the scribe to represent the form ربان. <sup>2</sup>B: تنزأ; Samir, 'Réponse', p. 299: سرأ. <sup>3</sup>This word is lacking in A and B, though the sense requires it; cf. Samir, 'Réponse', p. 299. <sup>4</sup>B: الأردال.

<sup>5</sup>A and B: باختبار; cf. C, p. 35. <sup>6</sup>These two words are added in the margin in A. <sup>7</sup>A and B:

قال تنصّل من الذنب أي: صانع. <sup>8</sup>The following words are added at the bottom of the folio in A: تبرأ وتخلّص منه. <sup>9</sup>Samir, 'Réponse', p. 300: والاعتذار. <sup>10</sup>This word is added in the margin in A.

<sup>11</sup>A and B: سبعون.

The one in need of God, ‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī, who is guided, who looks for his forgiveness and pardon, said: Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds,<sup>2</sup> and his blessings on all his prophets and their kindly, virtuous families and descendents one after the other until the Day of Judgement.<sup>3</sup> On the Day of Judgement he will be all I need.

To begin: every follower of a religion will inevitably favour his religion, and will not want any religion other than it. And there is no way of discerning the best from the worst except through testing, and testing can only be through reason. If there is no reason, it cannot be known that we have a Maker, and that he is a God who is one, unique, self-subsistent, eternal and timeless, and that he is victorious and generous.<sup>4</sup> He who does not use reason is ignorant, and he who is ignorant has gone astray, and he who has gone astray has fallen into unbelief.<sup>5</sup> For this reason the eternal One has called me to write this book of mine as a renunciation of the religion of Christianity, a justification | and advice to all Christians, and so that no one among them or among others might say that I only abandoned the religion of Christianity, which I followed all my life until I reached the age of seventy,<sup>6</sup> and preferred the *ḥanīfite* religion of Islam<sup>7</sup> in order to trade the world for a religion,<sup>8</sup> or joy for delusion.

2r

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1 Q 11:88.

2 Q 1:2–3.

3 This invocation includes the caliph and ruling house as descendants of the Prophet’s uncle ‘Abbās, but it also foreshadows the theme of the refutation, which is to distinguish those who preserve true belief about the prophets and their teachings, the Muslims, from those who do not.

4 These are all characteristically qur’ānic epithets of God.

5 This argument betrays the influence of the Mu’tazilī insistence on the use of reason as a means of both ascertaining the truth about religion and defending religion. It also strongly implies that Christianity comes under the accusation of unbelief.

6 For the likelihood of the accuracy of this date, see the discussion in the Introduction above, pp. 7–8.

7 Cf. Q 2:135, 3:67, where Abraham is described as neither a Jew nor a Christian but as a *ḥanīf*.

8 There is an echo here of Christian accusations against those who convert to Islam for personal gain, and so can be said to sell what is real in life for the religion they now profess. In fact, in Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq’s reply to the letter from Ibn al-Munajjim, the third reason given for people converting is an accusation to which ‘Alī could have been responding: ‘he prefers high standing over shame, honour over humbleness, power over weakness’ (Samir and Nwya, *Correspondence*, p. 693); see above p. 17.

بل ما توخيتُ في ما ألفتُ من كتابي هذا إلا القربى إلى الله عزّ وجلّ، والإعذار<sup>1</sup>  
والإنذار إلى كافّة النصارى، ورجوتُ أن يكون ذلك على طريق النصيحة لهم  
وإن كنتُ لا أشكّ أنهم يردّون وجوههم عنه وآذانهم وينقلبون ولا يقبلون،  
وأفوز بأجر الناصح المأجور ويوء من تأبى وذمّني بإثم المعتاب الموزور. وما ذلك  
بمانع أهل الشفقة والمحبة من تأدية الحقّ وأبداء العذر. وأنّ الرجل ربّما دعت  
الشفقة والرأفة على ولده أن يسقه الأدوية المرّة الكريهة المنتنة، بل ربّما اعتراه<sup>2V</sup>  
في جسده داء فقطع عضواً من أعضائه مخافة أن يسري الداء في جسده كلّ<sup>2</sup>  
فيهلكه. وما أيسر هلاك البدن وهو الغمّ العاجل. وأمّا هلاك النفس فهو خسران  
الأجل، كما قال المسيح عليه السلام لتلاميذه: "لا تخافوا قتله<sup>3</sup> الأبدان بل اتقوا  
قتله الأنفس"<sup>4</sup>، يعني المكذبة المضلّة.

وليس قصدي فيما أتيتُ به وأثبتته في كتابي هذا ردّاً على المسيح عليه السلام  
ولا على أهل حقّه بل على من خالف المسيح والأنجيل وحرّف الكلمات من  
صنوف النصارى، ولم يتصفّح كتابي هذا مسلم إلا ازداد سروراً بالإسلام، ولن  
يقراه نصرانيّ إلا وقع بين أمرين عظيمين: إمّا مفارقة دينه ومعاينة سرّه، وإمّا

<sup>1</sup>Samir, 'Réponse', p. 300: والاعتذار. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>A and B: قلة;

cf. C, p. 36. <sup>4</sup>A adds in the margin: يعني الأنفس: Samir, 'Réponse',

p. 300: الكذبة المضلّة: [يعني].



On the contrary, in what I have written in this book of mine I have only wanted to come closer to God, great and mighty, and to give a justification and a warning to all Christians. I hope that it will be in the form of advice to them, although I have no doubt that they will avert their heads and ears, turning away and not accepting. But I will gain the reward of a good and well-paid adviser, and those who disapprove of me and condemn me will be committing a blameworthy and grave crime. This does not prevent people of compassion and affection from pursuing truth and offering a justification.<sup>9</sup> A man's compassion and kindness for his son may drive him to give him bitter, distasteful, | evil-smelling medicines to drink, and if a disease affects his body he may even cut off one of his limbs for fear that the disease might speed through his whole body and destroy it.<sup>10</sup> And the destruction of the body, which is a passing affliction, is merely insignificant, but the destruction of the soul is a permanent loss: as Christ (peace be upon him) said to his disciples, 'Do not fear those who kill the bodies but beware those—cheating and deceiving ones—who kill the souls'.<sup>11</sup>

2v

In what I have set out and established in this book of mine, my intention is not to refute Christ (peace be upon him) or the people of his truth, but those Christian sects that oppose Christ and the Gospels and corrupt the words.<sup>12</sup> No Muslim will peruse this book of mine without increasing joy in Islam, and no Christian will read it without finding himself between two fearsome positions: either to abandon his religion and find fault with its basis, or to find what he

9 'Alī repeats three times in these opening paragraphs his desire to 'offer a justification' to Christians, by which he evidently means the offer of a reason for converting from Christianity, as he himself has done. He betrays a strong hint that Christians have accused him of converting out of self-interest, and his assertion that he made a rational choice is a counter to this charge.

10 This is the first of a succession of medical allusions throughout the refutation, a feature to be expected in a work written by a medical specialist who may have finished his major compendium, *Firdaws al-ḥikma*, only a year earlier.

11 Cf. Matthew 10:28||Luke 12:4–5. Ibn al-ʿAssāl, *Ṣaḥāʾih*, p. 36, cites this loose paraphrase and explanation as the first intimation in the *Radd* of 'Alī's lack of knowledge of the Gospel text.

12 This distinction between Christ and his true disciples on the one hand and Christian sects on the other, which is essentially qurʾānic, prepares the way for arguments that require a return to original Christianity as it is preserved in the Gospels. In line with this, 'Alī will maintain through most of the following arguments that the Gospels (which he refers to here in the plural) are textually intact and that Christian corruption of them consists in twisting their meaning.

الإعتياب على ما هو عليه والشك فيه ما تبقى من عمره لما يتضح عنده من حجة العقل وصحة النقل إن شاء الله تعالى.

وأنا إذاً أولاً دين الإسلام، ثم أسأل النصارى عن سبع مسائل سميتها<sup>3r</sup> المسكّات العواذل لأنها تسكّت المسؤول المنصف وتبكتّه، ولأنّ النصارى إنّ وافقوني عليها خرجوا من دينهم الذي يدينون به، وإنّ خالفوني خالفوا التوراة والإنجيل. ثمّ أتبع هذه المسائل مسائل آخر تقوية للسبع الأول، وأذكر بعد ذلك سبعة أوجه من التناقض والكبائر التي في الإنجيل وجدتها في شريعة إيمانهم. ثمّ أذكر أصناف النصارى وما يلزم كل صنف من الحجّة في مذهبه، وأشرح ما معنى الأبوة والبنوة والحلول بوجوه من البراهين لا مخرج لهم منها ولا محيد عنها، وأفسّر بعون الله تعالى الكلمات التي تأوّلوها بخلاف معانيها، وأذكر التحريف والفساد الموجود فيه. فإذا ثبت جميع ما احتجّوا به من كتبهم بالسريانية بعينها لثلاثين<sup>3v</sup> شاعر أو يحتجّ معاند إن شاء الله تعالى.

والإسلام هو الإيمان بالله الحيّ الذي لا يموت، الواحد الفرد الملك القدّوس الجوّاد العدل، إله إبراهيم وإسماعيل واسحق ويعقوب وإله موسى<sup>2</sup> وعيسى وسائر النبيّن وإله الخلق أجمعين، الذي لا ابتداء له ولا انتهاء ولا أنداد ولا أولاد، ولا أجداد<sup>3</sup> ولا أتراب ولا أنساب<sup>4</sup>، وإنّه<sup>5</sup> خالق الأشياء كلّها، لا من شيء ولا على حدّ ولا مثال بل كيف شاء، وبأنّ<sup>6</sup> قال لها: "كوني" فكانت على قدر واحد، وهو القدير الرؤوف الوهوب "الذي لا يظلم مثقال ذرّة" ولا يشبهه شيء في الأرض ولا<sup>7</sup> في السماء، وهو الغالب الذي لا يغلب، والجوّاد الذي لا يبخل، والعالم الذي

<sup>1</sup>B: تسلكت. <sup>2</sup>B and Samir, 'Réponse', p. 302, omit وإله موسى. <sup>3</sup>B and Samir, 'Réponse', p. 302, omit أجداد. <sup>4</sup>B and Samir, 'Réponse', p. 302: أسباب. <sup>5</sup>B: وإن. <sup>6</sup>B: وبأن. <sup>7</sup>This word is repeated in B.

believes faulty and to doubt it for the rest of his life, as the proof of reason and correctness of revelation become clear to him,<sup>13</sup> if God almighty wills.

Firstly, I | shall set out the religion of Islam, then I shall ask the Christians 3r  
seven questions which I have called 'the censuring silencers' because they silence the person questioned, if he is principled, and they place him at fault, and because if Christians agree with me about them they will abandon their religion which they follow, and if they disagree with me they will disagree with the Torah and Gospel. Then I shall follow these questions with others that will strengthen the first seven, and after this I shall refer to seven instances of contradiction and offences that are in the Gospel and that I have found in their Creed. Then I shall set out the sects of the Christians and the argument that each sect keeps to in its doctrine, and I shall explain the meaning of 'fatherhood', 'sonship' and 'indwelling' through forms of proofs from which there is no way out or escape.<sup>14</sup> With the help of God almighty, I shall interpret the words which they explain in contradiction to their meanings, and refer to the corruptness and falseness implicated in it. And thus, | if God the almighty wills, I will 3v  
establish exactly all the Syriac forms that they use from their books in argument so that no one can know them nor any opponent argue against them.<sup>15</sup>

Islam is belief in the living God, who does not die, the one, the sole, the king, the holy, the munificent, the just, the God of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob,<sup>16</sup> the God of Moses, Jesus and all the prophets, and the God of the whole creation; he has no beginning and no end, no equal and no offspring, no ancestors, no companions or relatives; he is the Creator of all things from nothing, not according to any limitation or model, but as he willed, by saying to them, 'Be!' and they were, according to one measure. He is the all-powerful, the gracious, the generous, 'who does no wrong even of an atom's weight', whom nothing resembles in the earth or heaven; he is the Conquering who is not conquered, the Munificent who is not miserly, the Knowing who is not

13 Reason and Islamic revelation concur in disclosing truth.

14 The extant text of the *Radd* tails off at what appears to be the beginning of this argument on fatherhood and sonship.

15 This hints at a polemical ploy that was favoured by Christians, of referring to authorities which they know their Muslim interlocutors cannot check. As would be expected of a former Nestorian, 'Ali shows that he is familiar with the Syriac New Testament throughout the refutation.

16 Cf. Q 4:163, where Ishmael precedes Isaac and assumes a prominence he has in Islam but not in Christianity. This reference hints at how thoroughly 'Ali has absorbed the teachings of his new faith.

4r لا يجهل، لا يفوته ظلم ظالم ولا يخفى عليه خافية، يعلم ما يلج في الأرض وما يخرج منها، وما ينزل من السماء وما يعرج فيها، وكلّ له قانتون. وأنّ محمّداً صلّى الله عليه وسلّم نبيّه ورسوله وكذلك موسى وعيسى صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين وسائر الأنبياء، لا نفرّق بين أحد من رسله، وأنّ الساعة آتية<sup>1</sup> لا ريب فيها، وأنّ الله يبعث من في القبور، وأنّ الأبرار لفي نعيم، وأنّ الفجار لفي جحيم. فهذه شريعة أهل الإسلام ودينهم.

وأوّل المسائل المسكّات: إنّنا نسأل النصارى عن هذا التوحيد الذي شرّحته والإيمان الذي وصفته، هل هو حقّ أم باطل؟

فإنّ قالوا: "حقّ"، فالذي هم عليه باطل لأنّهم يؤمنون بثلاثة آلهة بل بأربعة وهم الآب والإبن والروح القدس وإنسان أزليّ وهو يسوع المسيح. وحقيقة ذلك في شريعة إيمانهم التي أنا مفضّح لها ومبدي سرّها، 4v وأنها تنطق بأنّ يسوع المسيح مخلوق وليس بخالق كما يقولون.

فإنّ قالوا: "إنّما شرّحت في التوحيد باطلاً"، كفروا بما جاء به موسى وعيسى وسائر الأنبياء عليهم السلام وكلّهم موحد مخلص. قال الله تعالى لموسى عليه السلام في التوراة وكلّ النصارى يشهدون بها: "إنّني أنا الله، إلهيا أشريهيا، إله ابراهيم وإله اسحق وإله يعقوب، هذا إسمي إلى الأبد وهذا ذكرى إلى دهر الداهرين". وقال في السفر الثاني: "أنا الربّ إلهك فلا تعبد إلهاً غيري ولا تسجد له ولا تشبه بي شيئاً ممّا في السماء ولا ممّا في الأرض ولا ممّا تحت الماء". وقد كان يسوع المسيح صلوات الله عليه في الأرض، فمن قال: "إنّه الله"، فقد عصى الله. وقال لموسى عليه السلام

<sup>1</sup>This word is added in the margin in A.

ignorant, whom the injustice of the unjust does not escape, from whom what is kept hidden | is not hidden, who knows what is put into the earth and what comes out of it, what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it, whom all obey; and that Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) is his Prophet and Messenger, and also Moses and Jesus (may God's blessings be upon them both) and the rest of the prophets; we make no distinction between any of his messengers; and that the Hour is coming, there is no doubt about it, and that God will raise those who are in the tombs, and that the devout will indeed be in bliss, and the dissolute will be in hell. This is the Creed and religion of the People of Islam.<sup>17</sup> 4r

The first of the questions that silence: We ask the Christians about this matter of declaring God's unity which I have explained, and the faith which I have described—Is it true or mistaken?

If they say, True, then what they stand for is mistaken, because they believe in three or even four gods, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and an eternal human who is Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> The fact of this is in their Creed, the secrets of which I shall be uncovering and revealing, | though it states that Jesus Christ was created and not Creator, as they say. 4v

But if they say, 'You have given a wrong explanation of the divine unity', they disbelieve what Moses, Jesus and all the prophets (peace be upon them) delivered, for each of them believed sincerely in God's oneness. God the almighty says to Moses (peace be upon him) in the Torah, and all the Christians testify to it, 'Indeed, I am God, *Ihyā asher ihyā*, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob; this is my name for ever, and this is my title through all ages.'<sup>19</sup> And in the second Book he says, 'I am the Lord your God, and you shall not worship any god other than me, you shall not bow down before any, and you shall not liken to me anything that is in heaven or earth or under the water.'<sup>20</sup> But Jesus Christ (God's blessings be upon him) was on earth, so whoever says that he is God offends God. He says to Moses (peace be upon him) in his hymn, 'I am God,

17 This creedal amplification of the *Shahāda* combines a succession of allusions to the Qur'ān: e.g. 3:47, 4:40. The inclusion of Moses, Jesus and other prophets, emphasising the continuity of Islam with earlier revelations, underlines 'Alī's strategy of appealing to the authentic teachings of these figures against the doctrinal constructions that have distorted them.

18 As will be shown later, this is an over-literal interpretation of the Creed—'We believe in one lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God'—which few Christians could mistake as denoting a fourth Person in the Godhead.

19 Exodus 3:14–15.

20 Exodus 20:2–4.

5r في تسبيح له: "أنا الله عز وجل واعلموا أنني أنا وحدي وأني أنا أميت وأحيي وأنا أسقم وأنا أشفي ولا ينجو مني ناج". وافتتح متى الإنجيل الأول فقال: "كتاب مولود يسوع المسيح بن إبراهيم"، وهذا إقرار بأن الله قديم لا يتولد، فإن المتولد محدث وليس الله محدثاً بل هو محدث كل حادث. وقال متى تلميذ المسيح في الفصل الرابع من إنجيله إن رجلاً قال للمسيح: "أيها الخير"<sup>1</sup>. فقال المسيح مجيباً له: "لم سميتني خيراً؟"<sup>2</sup>، أليس الخير<sup>3</sup> إلا الله وحده؟". وقال يوحنا في الفصل السادس عشر من إنجيله: "إن المسيح رفع بصره إلى السماء وتضرع إلى الله"، وقال: "إن الحياة الدائمة يجب للناس أن يعلموا أنك أنت الله الواحد الحق وأنت أنت أرسلت يسوع المسيح". فهذا هو التوحيد المحض المصرح والإعتراف بأنه مبعوث، وهذا إيمان المسيح وجميع<sup>4</sup> الأنبياء عليهم السلام...<sup>5</sup> | اغتراراً شديداً وجرأة على الله 5v المجيد.

فإن قال قائل منهم: "إن المسيح وإن كان وحد واعترف أنه مبعوث كما في الإنجيل فقد أعترف في غير موضع أنه الأزلي الخالق"، فقد شنع على المسيح أقبح التشنيع ونسبه إلى التناقض بإعترافه مرة بأن الله واحد وأنه مبعوث وأدعائه بعد ذلك أنه خالق أزلي، والمسيح بريء من ذلك ومن<sup>6</sup> نسبه إلى ما لا يليق بالعقل لأن الإنجيل نطق أنه قال: "إني لم أجئ أعمل لمشيئتي بل لمشيئة من أرسلني". وقال متى تلميذ المسيح في إنجيله أن الشيطان دعا المسيح أن يسجد له وأراه ممالك الدنيا وزبرجدها وزخرفها ثم قال: "اسجد لي لأجعل هذا كله لك"، فقال المسيح عليه السلام: "إنه مكتوب ألا تعبد إلا الرب إلهك ولا تسجد لشيء سواه".

<sup>1</sup>B: الحبر; cf. C, p. 42. <sup>2</sup>B: حبراً. <sup>3</sup>B: الحبر. <sup>4</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>5</sup>A few

words (perhaps a phrase) appear to have been dropped at this point in A. <sup>6</sup>B: ومن.

great and mighty, and you should know that I am the only One; I | make die and 5r  
 I make live, I make ill and I make well, there is none who can escape from me.’<sup>21</sup>  
 And Matthew begins the first Gospel by saying, ‘The book of the generation of  
 Jesus Christ, the son of Abraham.’<sup>22</sup> This is confirmation that God is eternal and  
 not generated, because the generated is temporal and God in not temporal but  
 is the Bringer into being of all that comes into being. Matthew, Christ’s disciple,  
 says in Chapter 4 of his Gospel, ‘A man said to Christ, “O good one”, but Christ  
 replied to him, “Why do you call me good? Is there anyone good except God  
 alone?”’<sup>23</sup> In Chapter 16 of his Gospel John says, ‘Christ raised his eyes to heaven  
 and entreated God, saying, “Eternal life is that people must know that you are  
 God, the one, the true, and that you have sent Jesus Christ.”’<sup>24</sup> This is the pure,  
 clear declaration of God’s oneness, and the acknowledgement that he was sent.  
 This is the faith of Christ and all the prophets (peace be upon them) ... | is great 5v  
 deludedness and insolence towards God the magnificent.

If one of them says: ‘Although Christ declared God’s oneness and acknowl-  
 edged that he was sent, as is in the Gospel, in other places he acknowledged  
 that he is the eternal One and the Creator’, he has levelled the most repugnant  
 slander against Christ and has linked him with self-contradiction through his  
 acknowledgement at one time that God is one and he himself was sent, and  
 his claim after this that he is an eternal Creator. Christ had nothing to do with  
 this, nor with anyone who links him with what is not connected with reason.<sup>25</sup>  
 For the Gospel states that he said, ‘I have not come to act in accordance with  
 my own will but in accordance with the will of him who sent me.’<sup>26</sup> Matthew,  
 the disciple of Christ, says in his Gospel that Satan asked Christ to bow down  
 to him, showing him the kingdoms of the world and their treasures and adorn-  
 ments. Then he said, ‘Bow down to me, and I will make all this yours.’ But Christ  
 (peace be upon him) said, ‘It is written that you shall not worship any but the  
 Lord your God, nor bow down to anything other than him.’<sup>27</sup>

21 Deuteronomy 32:39, part of the hymn of Moses at the end of the Torah.

22 Matthew 1:1.

23 Mark 10:17–18||Luke 18:18–19.

24 John 17:3.

25 As ‘Ali has made clear at the start of the *Radd*, true religion is compatible with reason.  
 Hence Christ cannot have had any connection with what is not rational.

26 John 5:30, 6:38.

27 Matthew 4:9–10.

6r المسألة الثانية من المسكّات: إنّنا نسألهم عن ما وصف به المسيح نفسه: هل يكون محققاً في بعض ومبطلاً في بعض؟

فإن قالوا: "إنّه محقّ في بعض ذلك ومبطلاً في بعضه"، كفروا به وكذبوا بإخباره. وإن قالوا: "إنّه محقّ في جميع ذلك"، فقد أقرّوا بأنّه مبعوث وأنّه مربوب وأنّ الله واحد فرد كما قدّمتُ وبيّنتُ من قوله. وهذا خلاف لما في شريعة إيمانهم التي تقول: "إنّه إله حقّ من إله حقّ". فَن<sup>2</sup> قال في المسيح بمثل ما قال في نفسه فهو المؤمن به، ومن قال فيه بخلاف ما وصف به نفسه فهو المخالف المغرور، لأنّ المسيح قال عن نفسه ما حكاه عنه يوحنا في آخر إنجيله: "ها أنا ذاهب إلى أبي وأبيكم وإلهي وإلهكم". وقال في الفصل الرابع من إنجيله إنّ المسيح قال لتلاميذه: "من قبلكم وآواكم فقد قبلني، ومن قبلني فإنّما يقبل من أرسلني، ومن يقبل نبياً باسم نبيّ فإنّما يفوز بأجر من قبل النبيّ". وقال يوحنا التلميذ في الفصل الخامس من إنجيله: "إنّني لم أجئ لأعمل لمشيئة نفسي بل لمشيئة من أرسلني، ومشيئته أنّ لا أضيع شيئاً ممّا وهبه لي". فهذا الإقرار بأنّه موهوب مبعوث وليس بجحود.

الثالثة من المسكّات: إنّنا نسألهم عن الأزليّ الخالق: هل يتغيّر عن حال قدمه وجوهريته وتحاف عليه الأمراض والموت أم لا؟

فإن قالوا: "إنّه يتغيّر أو يموت"، فقد مات إيمانهم، وكان قائل هذا القول كمن شبه الله تعالى في كتابه بالأنعام، وكمن شبه المسيح بالكلاب والخنازير، وكمن شبه إشعيا النبيّ بالحمر والبقر في قوله: "عرف الثور من اقتناه والحمار مربط ربّه ولم يعرف بنو

1B: يمين. 2B: يقول.



The second question of the Silencers: We shall ask them what description Christ gave of himself—Was it true in part and mistaken in part? 6r

If they say: It was true in part of it and mistaken in part, they cease to believe in him and they declare the reports about him untruthful. And if they say that it was true in its entirety, they attest that he was sent and was subordinate, and that God is one and alone, as I have already pointed out from his words.<sup>28</sup> This is opposed to what is in their Creed, which says that he is true God from true God. Whoever says about Christ things similar to what he says about himself is a believer in him, and whoever says about him what is opposed to what he describes himself as being is a deluded opponent. This is because Christ said about himself what John related about him at the end of his Gospel, 'Now I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'.<sup>29</sup> And in Chapter 4 of his Gospel he says that Christ said to his disciples, 'Whoever receives you and shelters you has | received me, and whoever receives me receives the One who sent me, and whoever receives a prophet with the name prophet obtains the recompense of the one who receives a prophet'.<sup>30</sup> In Chapter 5 of his Gospel John the disciple says, 'I have not come to carry out my own will, but the will of the One who sent me, and his will is that I should not lose a thing that he has given me'.<sup>31</sup> This is confirmation that he was given to and sent, and that he made no denial. 6v

The third of the silencers: We will ask them about the eternal Creator—Can he be changed from the condition of his eternity and substantiality,<sup>32</sup> and can illnesses and death affect him or not?

If they say that he is changed and dies, their belief has died, and the person who says this is like the person whom God almighty in his Book likens

28 The identification of Christ as a being who acts in accordance with God's will is one of the fundamental principles on which 'Alī bases his argument that Christ was human and not divine.

29 John 20:17.

30 Matthew 10:40–41, with a slight clarification of 'he who receives a prophet with the name prophet receives a prophet's reward'.

31 John 6:38–39, with significant changes to the opening words: 'For I came down from heaven not to act ...', and to 'and my Father's will is that ...'.

32 The terms *jawhar* and *jawhariyya*, 'substance' and 'substantiality', are distinctive of Arab Christian portrayals of God. As part of the terminology used to describe the Godhead, *jawhar* conveyed the idea of the substance as opposed to the hypostases. Its use in this way attracted severe criticisms from Muslims because for them it connoted a concrete entity that was part of the make-up of the physical world. It is therefore surprising that 'Alī continues to use it without any indication that it is unacceptable.

7r إسرائيل قدر ذلك. وإن قالوا: "إنّ الأزليّ الخالق لا يتغيّر ولا يموت"، خالفوا  
 شريعة إيمانهم، ومن خالفها كان عندهم كافراً بها، فإنّها تقول: "إنّ يسوع المسيح  
 خالق غير مخلوق وإنّه إله حقّ من إله حقّ من جوهر أبيه وإنّه قُتل وصلب وأولم،  
 فإلهمهم إذاً قد تغيّر ومات، وأنا موضح فساد هذه الشريعة وتناقضها وأنّها لا<sup>2</sup> تثبت  
 للحقّ بل تنتشر انتشاراً، وإذا صحّ فسادها فسد الإيمان، ومن أقام على إيمان فاسد  
 قام على غرر عظيم.

الرابعة من المسائل المسكّات: إنّنا نسألهم عن هذه الشريعة التي لا اختلاف بين  
 جماهيرهم فيها، ولا يتمّ لهم قربان إلّا بها: هل هي حقّ من أوّلها إلى آخرها أو باطل  
 كلّها، أو بعضها حقّ وبعضها باطل؟

7v فإنّ قالوا: "بعضها حقّ وبعضها باطل"، أبطلوا بعض الإيمان وكفروا به، وفي  
 بطلان بعضه فساد كلّ. وإنّ قالوا: "هي حقّ من أوّلها إلى آخرها"، فنفتح<sup>3</sup> ونقول:  
 "إنّما نؤمن بالله الواحد الآب، مالك كلّ شيء وصانع كلّ ما يرى وما لا يرى".  
 فإنّ كان ذلك صحيحاً<sup>4</sup>، فالمسيح إذاً مخلوق مبعوث، فإنّه لا يخلو أن يكون من  
 الأشياء التي تُرى أو من الأشياء التي لا تُرى. فمن أيّها كان، فهو مخلوق والله خالقه  
 لقول شريعة الإيمان: "إنّ الله خالق ما<sup>5</sup> يرى ولا يرى". وإنّ احتجّ محتجّ وقال: "إنّ  
 في آخر الشريعة بعينها ما يشهد لهم بأنّ المسيح هو أيضاً إله حقّ وإنّه خالق كلّ  
 شيء"، كان الجواب فيه: "وإنّ كان آخر شريعتهم موافقاً لأوّلها فالأمر كما قلناه،  
 وإنّ كان آخرها مخالفاً لأوّلها فالشريعة إذاً فاسدة متناقضة، وإذا فسدت الشريعة  
 فسد الإيمان بها وضلّ المؤمنون بها."

<sup>1</sup>A and B: كافر. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A and is lacking in B. <sup>3</sup>B: فانفتح. <sup>4</sup>A and

B: صحيح. <sup>5</sup>A and B: من.

to animals,<sup>33</sup> or the person whom Christ likens to dogs or pigs,<sup>34</sup> or the person whom the prophet Isaiah likens to asses or cows, in his words, ‘The ox knows who owns it, and the ass the place where its master keeps it, but the People of Israel do not know this much.’<sup>35</sup> If they say: | ‘The eternal Creator cannot be changed and does not die’, they are at variance with their Creed, and in their eyes the one who is at variance with it does not believe in it, for it says that Jesus Christ is Creator not created, and is true God from true God, of the substance of his Father, and that he was killed and crucified and made to suffer. Thus, their God was changed and died. I am going to demonstrate the mistakenness of this Creed and its self-contradictoriness, and that it does not confirm truth but is completely disordered. And if it is correct that it is mistaken then the belief is mistaken, and one who holds a mistaken belief is situated over an immense danger. 7r

The fourth of the silencing questions: We shall ask them about this Creed over which there is no disagreement among their masses, and without which no service of communion is complete for them—Is it true from its beginning to end or is it entirely mistaken, or is part of it true and part mistaken?

If they say: ‘Part of it is true and part mistaken’, they declare part of the belief mistaken and disbelieve it, and in the mistakenness of part of it lies the error of the whole of it. And if they say: ‘It is true from its beginning to end’, we will begin and say, ‘We believe in one God and Father, | Possessor of all things, Maker of all that is seen and unseen.’<sup>36</sup> If this is true, then Christ must be created and sent, and he must be among the things that are seen or the things that are unseen. Whichever he is, he is created and God is his Creator, because of the statement of the Creed: ‘God is Creator of what is seen and unseen’. If someone advances an argument and says that at the end of the Creed itself is what witnesses to them that Christ also is true God and is the Creator of all things, the reply to this is: ‘If the end of the Creed agrees with its beginning then the situation is as we have said, and if its end is different from its beginning then the Creed is mistaken and self-contradictory. And if the Creed is mistaken, belief in it is mistaken and believers in it are astray.’ 7v

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33 Q 7:179, 25:44.

34 Matthew 7:6; 15:26.

35 Isaiah 1:3.

36 This differs from the opening of the Creed itself: ‘We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen’, though there does not appear to be any underlying doctrinal or polemical reason.

ولا أعلم من الغلثان والبهت<sup>1</sup> شيئاً<sup>2</sup> أشنع من أمة تقوم بين يدي إلهها فترفع أصواتها فتقول: "نؤمن بأنك أنت الله الواحد وأنك خالق كل ما نرى وما لا نرى"، ثم يقولون: "نعم يا رب ونؤمن بإله آخر | هو خالق الأشياء كلها مثلك". ولو خاطب 8r رجل بمثل هذا الخطاب سيّداً أو سلطاناً لكان ذلك سخفاً منه واستخفاً بقدرته، فكيف بمن يخاطب بمثل هذا القول الخلاق القديم؟ تعالى الله عن مثل هذا القول.

الخامسة من المسائل المسكّات: إننا نسألهم عن المسيح: هل هو الخالق الأزلي كما في شريعة إيمانهم أو<sup>3</sup> هو إنسان مصطفى كما في شريعة إيماننا أو هو إله وإنسان كما قالت طوائف منهم؟

فإن قالوا: "هو إنسان مخلوق مبعوث"، وافقوا المسلمين<sup>4</sup> في شريعة إيمانهم. وإن قالوا: "بل هو إله خالق أزلي"، خالفوا الإنجيلات وغيرها من الكتب وكفروا بها. فقد قال متى في الفصل الثامن في إنجيله يستشهد بنبوّة أشعيا عن<sup>5</sup> المسيح عليه السلام حين قال عن الله عزّ وجلّ: "هذا عبدي الذي اصطفيته وحببي الذي ارتاحت 8v له نفسي، ها أنا ذا | واضع<sup>6</sup> روحي عليه ويدعو الأمم إلى الحق". وهذا تصريح وليس بمجمجة<sup>7</sup>، وأشعيا نبيّ وليس بمتمّم، والمحتجّ بنبوته هو الإنجيل، فالعبد لا يكون إلهاً، والإله لا يكون عبداً كما وسمّموه<sup>8</sup>، فتدبروا ذلك أيها النصارى.

<sup>1</sup>B: والهت. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>A and B: وهو. <sup>4</sup>A and B: المسلمون. <sup>5</sup>A

and B: واضح. <sup>6</sup>A and B: واضح. cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, pp. 109–110, and also C, p. 44. <sup>7</sup>B: بحجة. <sup>8</sup>B: وسمّموه.

I do not know an error or a lie more atrocious than a community that stands before their God raising their voices and saying, ‘We believe that you are the one God and are Creator of all we see and do not see’, and then saying ‘Yes, Lord, and we believe in another God | who like you is Creator of all things.’<sup>37</sup> If a man addressed a master or ruler in this manner, it would be folly on his part and disdain for his power. So how will it be for someone who addresses words such as these to the eternal Creator? May God be elevated above such words as these! 8r

The fifth of the silencing questions: We will ask them about Christ—Is he the eternal Creator as is in their Creed, or is he a chosen man as is in our Creed, or is he God and man as groups of them have said?<sup>38</sup>

If they say, ‘He is a man created and sent’, they agree in their Creed with the Muslims. And if they say, ‘No, he is God, Creator and eternal’, they differ from the Gospels and other books, and they disbelieve in them. For in Chapter 8 in his Gospel, Matthew calls the prophecy of Isaiah to witness that Christ (peace be upon him) was a servant, when he says from God, great and mighty, ‘This is my servant whom I have chosen, and my beloved with whom I am pleased; indeed, I will place my spirit upon him and he will call the nations to the truth.’<sup>39</sup> This is a clear | statement and not mumbling, and Isaiah was a prophet and not an accuser, and the support for his prophecy is the Gospel.<sup>40</sup> For the servant cannot be divine and the Divinity cannot be a servant, as you have named him. So, Christians, think about this. 8v

37 This free interpretation of the Creed understandably elicits from Ibn al-‘Assāl a direct denial. At this point Ibn al-‘Assāl also comments that ‘Alī’s practice of calling the Creed *sharī‘at al-īmān* rather than the term he himself favours, *al-amāna al-jāmi‘a*, shows ‘Alī’s confusion between the statement of faith and the canonical law of the church. His comment, from the perspective of a later time, points to the relative difficulty of finding adequate terms for such items in the mid-9th century.

38 The teaching that Christ was composed of two natures was shared by all three of the main Christian communities that ‘Alī and other Muslims would have known at this time. His contrasting this teaching with the words of the Creed draws a somewhat artificial distinction, given that they would all claim to base their definitions of Christ on what the Creed contains.

39 There is some confusion in the quotation of Matthew 3:17, which in the scriptural version has no reference to verses from Isaiah. In all three Synoptic Gospels, the voice from heaven at Jesus’ baptism refers to him as Son not servant. ‘Alī conflates the heavenly words about Jesus as Son of God at his baptism with Isaiah 42:1, which are applied to him in Matthew 12:18.

40 What ‘Alī appears to mean here is that the saying from Isaiah, which is not among the books that Muslims would necessarily accept as authoritative, is validated by being quoted in the Gospel, which Muslims would accept.

وقد قال ماركس التلميذ في إنجيله إنَّ المسيح قال وهو على الخشبة: "يا إلهي يا إلهي [لم<sup>1</sup>] خذلتي". وذلك آخر كلام تكلم به في الدنيا. وقال متى في الفصل العشرين من إنجيله: "إنَّ المسيح تناول خبزة فكسرها، وتناول الخواريين<sup>2</sup> كسرة وقال هذا لحمي، وتناولهم كأساً فيها مشروب<sup>3</sup> وقال هذا دمي". ومن كان له لحم ودم فهو جسم، وكل جسم له طول وعرض وعمق، وما كان كذلك فهو مذكوع موزون، والله جلّ جلاله لا يُدرك ولا يوزن، لأنَّ كلَّ مذكوع متناه محدود، وكلَّ متناه صائر إلى البلاء والفساد. وقال لوقا في الفصل الثالث | من إنجيله يصف المسيح<sup>gr</sup> عليه السلام إذ كان صبياً فيقول: "إنَّ الصبيَّ كان يتربّي في قامته وحكمته ويزيد عند الله وعند الناس". وقال أيضاً في هذا الفصل: "إنَّ الصبيَّ كان يتربّي ويقوى بروح القدس ويمتلئ حكمة، وكانت نعمة الله ظاهرة عليه". ومحال أن يقول الأزلي الخالق إنَّ له إلهاً ويقال فيه إنَّه كان صبياً<sup>4</sup> إذ كانت نعمة إله أزلي آخر ظاهرة عليه.

وقال يوحنا في الفصل الخامس عشر من إنجيله إنَّ المسيح قال لتلاميذه: "إنَّ كلامي الذي سمعتموه هو كلام من أرسلني". وقال في هذا الفصل: "إنَّ أبي أجلّ وأعظم مني". وقال يوحنا في إنجيله عن المسيح: "كما أمرني ربّي فكذلك أفعل فقوموا نمضي إلى مكاء<sup>5</sup> فإنّي أنا الكرم الحقّ وأبي هو الفلاح". وقال في الفصل الرابع عن المسيح إنَّه قال: "أسأل أبي أن يعطيكم فارقليط آخر، النور | المضيء الذي لا يزول عن الطريق، كيف يقال له كذى<sup>gr</sup> يقول، وهو يشهد عليّ وأنتم تشهدون، وأنا أنبئكم بالأمثال وهو يأتيكم بالبيان".

<sup>1</sup>This word is lacking in A and B, though is required by the sense of the sentence; cf. C, pp. 45–46.

<sup>2</sup>A and B: الخواريون. <sup>3</sup>A and B: مشروباً. <sup>4</sup>A and B: صبي. <sup>5</sup>Alī appears here to have in mind

the Syriac of John 14:31: *qum(u) nīzal mekā*, 'So arise, let us go hence'.

The disciple Mark said in his Gospel that when he was on the cross Christ said, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'<sup>41</sup> And this was the last utterance he made on earth. And Matthew says in Chapter 20 of his Gospel that Christ took bread and broke it and gave a piece to the disciples, saying, 'This is my flesh'. And he gave them a cup containing drink, saying, 'This is my blood'.<sup>42</sup> He who has flesh and blood is a body, and every body has length, breadth and depth, and what exists in this manner can be measured and weighed. But God, great is his grandeur, cannot be measured or weighed, because everything that can be measured is bounded and limited, and everything that is bounded decomposes and disintegrates. Luke in Chapter 3 | of his Gospel, describing Christ (peace be upon him) when he was a child, says, 'The child grew in stature and wisdom and increased before God and people.'<sup>43</sup> In this Chapter he also says, 'The child grew and became stronger through the Holy Spirit and was filled with wisdom, and God's grace was evident upon him.'<sup>44</sup> It is impossible for the eternal Creator to say that he had a God, or to say that he was a child when the grace of another eternal God was evident upon him. gr

John in Chapter 15 of his Gospel says that Christ told his disciples: 'My words which you hear are the words of the One who sent me.'<sup>45</sup> In this Chapter he says, 'My Father is greater and mightier than I.'<sup>46</sup> In his Gospel John says from Jesus, 'As my Father commands me, I do. So arise, let us go hence. I am the true vine and my Father is the grower.'<sup>47</sup> In Chapter 4 he says from Christ that he said, 'I will ask my Father to give you another Paraclete, the shining | light that does not vanish from the way. As he is told, so he tells. He witnesses to me, and you are witnesses. I speak to you in parables, and he will bring you the gv

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41 Mark 15:34.

42 Matthew 26:26–28.

43 Luke 2:52.

44 Luke 2:40 with a minor change.

45 John 14:24.

46 John 14:28.

47 John 14:31–35:1. The phrase *fa-qūmū namqī ilā makā*, which causes difficulties for both B and C, echoes the Syriac.

وقال لوقا في آخر إنجيله إنّ المسيح دخل على تلامذته بعد أن قام من بين الموتى وهم مجتمعون في غرفة قد أغلقوا بابها، فارتابوا به وارتاعوا منه، وظنّوا أنّه روح من الأرواح قد ولج بابهم، وعلم<sup>1</sup> المسيح وجّلهم من ذلك فقال لهم: "حيّوني يا هؤلاء، واعلموا أن الأرواح لا يكون لها لحم وعظم مثل ما تجدون من اللحم والعظم". وقد علمنا أنّ اللحم والعظم مصنوعان<sup>2</sup>، وأنّ صانعهما ليس بجسم بل هو مبتدع الأجسام. فنّ قال إنّ المسيح مربوب، وإنّه<sup>3</sup> كان صبيّاً يذهب طولاً وعرضاً وإنّ من كان كذلك فليس بأزليّ خالق بل مخلوق، فقد وافق المسيح وتلامذته، ومن قال بخلاف ذلك فهو مخالف لهم أجمعين. ونحن الموافقون لله 10r وللمسيح، وهم المخالفون لله وللمسيحه.

وقد يخرج عليهم من هذا القول كبيرة أخرى أزرى وأشنع من الأولى، وهي أنّ المسيح إنّ كان أزليّاً خالقاً كما في شريعة إيمانهم لزمهم أن يجعلوا بعض الربّ خالقاً أزليّاً وبعضاً ميّتاً مخلوقاً، لأنّ المسيح مقرباً أنّه لحم ودم، فاللحم والدم إذاً خالقان أزليّان. وقد علمنا أنّهما يتولدان على الأغذية والأشربة، وتلك الأغذية والأشربة أجزاء من أجزاء الدنيا، فخالق الدنيا كلّها جزء من أجزاء الدنيا<sup>4</sup>، وذلك الجزء بعينه هو خالق نفسه أيضاً لأنّه جزء من الدنيا التي هو خالق كلّها. فهو أشنع ما يكون من البهتان وأبعد ما يكون من المعقول، ومن قبل ذلك ودان به جعل المخلوق خالقاً والخالق مخلوقاً كما بينّا آنفاً، وذلك أنّهم صيروا اللحم والدم خالقاً أزليّاً، والأزليّ الخالق للحما ودماً. وبهذا تنطق شريعة إيمانهم قولها: "إنّ المسيح خالق غير مخلوق".

<sup>1</sup>This word is repeated in A. <sup>2</sup>A and B: مصنوعاً. <sup>3</sup>A and B: إلهاً. <sup>4</sup>من الدنيا ... من الدنيا: these words are added in the margin in A.



explanation.<sup>48</sup> At the end of his Gospel, Luke says that Christ went in to his disciples after rising from the dead, when they were gathered in a room whose doors they had locked. They were in doubt about him and frightened of him, and they thought he was a spirit that had penetrated through their door. Christ was aware of their alarm about this and said to them, 'Greet me, friends, and know that spirits do not have flesh and bones like the flesh and bones you are encountering.'<sup>49</sup> Now we know that flesh and bones are made, and that their Maker is not a body but the Initiator of bodies. So those who say that Christ was subordinate, and that he was a child who grew in height and breadth, and that anyone who was like this could not be eternal Creator but created, will be agreeing with Christ and his disciples. And those who say the contrary to this will be opposed to them all. | It is we who are in agreement with God and Christ, and they who are opposed to God and his Christ.

10r

From these words another serious matter rears up against them, more contemptible and atrocious than the first. This is that if Christ was eternal Creator, as is in their Creed, then since Christ affirmed that he was flesh and blood, they are compelled to make part of the Lord eternal Creator and part mortal and created, so that the flesh and blood would then be two eternal Creators. We know that these are produced through food and drink, and this food and drink are parts of the world, so the Creator of the entire world would be part of the world. This very part would be creator of himself as well, because he would be part of the world of whose whole he was Creator. This is the most atrocious piece of lying, and as far from rationality as can be. Anyone who accepts this and observes it in his religion makes the created Creator and the Creator created, as we have shown above, which is that they have made flesh and blood the eternal Creator, and the eternal Creator flesh and blood. Their Creed states this in its words, 'Christ was Creator not created'.

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48 This is a compilation of parts of John 14:16, 1:9, 16:13, 15:26–27 and 16:25, with small changes that suggest the abiding superiority of Islam: the light that will not disappear, and the *Bayān*, the Qur'ān, which will be more direct and clearer than Jesus' Gospel.

49 John 20:19–20, Luke 24:33–40.

10v ويلزمهم أشنع من هذه، وذلك إن كان بعض الدنيا هو خالق جميع الدنيا وبعض الشيء لا يكون موجوداً<sup>1</sup> إلا بعد وجود كلاً، وما ليس بموجود ولا معقول فهو لا شيء، نخالف الدنيا عندهم معدوم<sup>2</sup> غير موجود ومجهول غير معقول. وإذا كان خالقها غير موجود فهي<sup>3</sup> إذاً غير مخلوقة.

وأظن أصحاب هذه<sup>4</sup> الشريعة قصدوا إلى هذا المعنى بعينه لا إلى غيره. والمثل في ذلك قول من قال: "إن جزءاً من أجزاء الإنسان هو خالق الإنسان كلاً"، وقد علمنا أن ذلك اللحم لم يكن قبل الإنسان، وما لم يكن قبل الإنسان<sup>5</sup> فهو لا شيء، فكأنه قال: "إن خالق الإنسان لا شيء".

السادسة من المسائل المسكتات: نسألهم عن المسيح: هل كان في بلد من البلدان وفي زمان من الأزمنة أم لا؟

11r فإن قالوا إنه لم يكن في بلد ولا زمان، فقد خالفوا الإنجيل، فإن متى التلميذ يقول في أول إنجيله: "إن المسيح وُلد في بيت لحم المنسوب إلى يهوذا<sup>6</sup> وأنه وُلد في أيام هيردوس الملك". ويقول لوقا في إنجيله إنه وُجد في الملعف مقموطاً وقتل في أيام فيلاطوس الملك. ومن كان في زمان من الأزمنة وفي مكان من الأمكنة فالزمان أبداً قبله والأمكنة كانت محيطة به، وما كان كذلك فهو مخلوق. ومتى ثبت أن المسيح مخلوق بطلت شريعة إيمانهم التي تقول: "إنه إله حق من إله حق، وإنه خالق كل شيء"، لأن الزمان شيء من الأشياء المخلوقة، والزمان قبل يسوع المسيح الذي خلق الأشياء كلها، فكيف يجوز

<sup>1</sup>A and B: موجود. <sup>2</sup>A and B: معدوماً. <sup>3</sup>A and B: وهي. <sup>4</sup>This word is repeated in B. <sup>5</sup> ما لم يكن

وأنه ولد أيام<sup>6</sup>: these words are added in the margin in A. قبل الإنسان

in A and then crossed out.

Something even more atrocious than this is forced upon them. This is that if a part of the world was Creator of the whole world, and part of something can only be existent after the whole exists and what is not existent or intelligible is nothing, then in their view the Creator of the world was non-existent and not existent, unknown and unintelligible. And if its Creator was not existent, then it was not created. 10v

I think that those responsible for this Creed intended this very meaning and no other. It is like someone saying: 'One of the parts of a human is creator of the whole human', though we know that the flesh itself did not precede the human, and what did not precede the human is nothing. So, it is as though he is saying: 'The Creator of the human is nothing'.<sup>50</sup>

The sixth of the silencing questions: We will ask them about Christ—Was he in one locality and time or not?

If they say that he was not in a locality or time, then they are in disagreement with the Gospel, because Matthew the disciple says at the beginning of his Gospel: 'Christ was born in | Bethlehem of Judea and he was born in the days of Herod the king.'<sup>51</sup> And Luke says in his Gospel that he was swaddled in the manger, and was killed in the time of Pilate the king.<sup>52</sup> Someone who was in a particular time and place would always have before him time and around him place, and what is like this is created. And since it is confirmed that Christ was created, their Creed, which says 'He is true God from true God and is Creator of all things', is proved wrong, because time is one of the things that is created, and time was before Jesus Christ who created all things. So how can it be right for 11r

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50 'Alī again emphasises the distinction between the clear teachings of Christian scripture and the confused and contorted interpretations of later Christians.

51 Matthew 2:1.

52 Luke 2:12, 23:24.

أَنْ يَكُونَ الزَّمان قبل خالق الزَّمان<sup>1</sup> والمكان محيط بمبتدع المكان؟ وهذا<sup>2</sup> أشنع ما يكون من العائط والبهتان، والمولود الذي وُلد في زمان وحصره مكان فهو إنسان ابن إنسان وعبد ابن أمة، وفي هذا نقض<sup>3</sup> الشريعة وإبطال الدين | ووجوب فيما  
 11v أخبر وقطعت حججهم ومعاذيرهم فيما اختلفوا.

السابعة من المسائل المسكَّات: أُنِّي وجدت يوحنا التلميذ يقول في الفصل الخامس من إنجيله: "كما كان للآب حياة من جوهره فكذلك أعطى الابن حياة في قنومه".<sup>4</sup> وقال يوحنا التلميذ أيضاً في الفصل الخامس من إنجيله إنَّ المسيح قال: "إِنِّي لو كنتُ أنا الشاهد لنفسي على صحَّة دعواي لكنت باطلاً، ولكن غيري يشهد لي وأنا أشهد لنفسي، ويشهد لي أبي الذي أرسلني. ومكتوب في التوراة التي يستشهدوني بها أنَّ شهادة رجلين حقٌّ". وفي هذا الباب معنيان فاسدان، أحدهما<sup>5</sup> أنَّه ذكر أنَّ الله عزَّ وجلَّ وهو أيضاً رجل، والثاني أنَّه أقام شهادته لنفسه مقام شهادة غيره. وهذا غلط ومغالطة ممَّن حكاها عن المسيح، لأنَّ التوراة تقول إنَّ شهادة رجلين لمن ادَّعى دعوى هذا قد أحلَّ نفسه محلَّ التهمة. ودعى إليها الظنَّة  
 12r في قوله: "لو كنتُ أنا أشهد لنفسي لكنت شهادتي باطلاً". والمسيح عليه السلام لا يليق به مثل هذا القول في نفسه.

محيطه به وما كان كذلك فهو مخلوق ومتى ثبت ان المسيح مخلوق بطلت شريعة إيمانهم التي  
 تقول انه إله حق من إله حقَّ وانه خالق كل شيء لان الزمان شيء من الاشياء المخلوقة والزمان قبل  
 يسوع المسيح الذي خلق الاشياء كلها فكيف يجوز ان يكون الزمان قبل خالق الزمان والمكان  
 repetition of the preceding words. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>B: انقض. <sup>4</sup>A and  
 B read: كما كان الاب حياة من جوهره فكذلك اعطى الابن حياة في قوته; cf. C, p. 46. 'Ali may well  
 have in mind the Syriac form of the verse: **ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܐ ܕܡܢ ܚܝܐ ܐܒܝܗ ܕܡܢ ܚܝܐ ܐܒܝܗ**  
 'As the Father has life in his person (*be-qnumeh*), so  
 he has given the Son life in his person (*be-qnumeh*). <sup>5</sup>B: احد بما.

time to precede the Creator of time, and for place to be around the Initiator of place? This is the most atrocious rubbish and slander possible. The generated being, who is generated in time and circumscribed by place, is a human, child of a human, and a servant, child of a maidservant. In this lies the destruction of the Creed, the abolition of the religion | and the obligation to what has been communicated, and their arguments and excuses in which they disagree are invalidated. 11v

The seventh of the silencing questions: I have found John the disciple saying in Chapter 5 of his Gospel, 'As the Father has life from his substance, so he has given the Son life in his person.'<sup>53</sup> And John the disciple also says in Chapter 5 of his Gospel that Christ said, 'If I were witness of myself about the truthfulness of my claim, it would be pointless. But another witnesses for me. So I witness for myself, and my Father who sent me witnesses for me. It is written in the Torah which they quote against me that the testimony of two men is true.'<sup>54</sup> On this issue there are two incorrect points: one is that he says that God, great and mighty, is also a man; and the other is that he puts forward a testimony to himself in place of the testimony of another person. This is an error and deceit on the part of anyone who relates it about Christ, because the Torah says, 'The testimony of two men to someone | who makes a claim releases him from suspicion'. And he invites suspicion about himself by saying, 'If I witnessed to myself then my witness would be invalid'. But such words about himself are not appropriate for Christ (peace be upon him).<sup>55</sup> 12r

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53 John 5:26. The form of words that appears here subtly expresses the distinctions within the triune Godhead, suggesting that maybe 'Alī preserves a theologically formulated version of the verse. The Father is identified as substance, *jawhar*, and the Son as hypostasis, *qunūm*, and Life (Spirit) is conferred from the Father upon the Son. This model of the Trinity, in which the Son and Spirit are dependent upon the Father, who is their substantive origin, contrasts with the model in which the three Persons are all hypostases of the substance. Of course, for 'Alī the significance of the verse is that it distinguishes Christ from the Father.

54 John 5:31–32, 5:37, 8:17.

55 'Alī's objection that according to John's Gospel Christ made himself a witness to himself in contradiction to the Torah, which stipulates the witness of two others, leads him to the point of denying the validity of these words, though he does not explicitly say this.

وحكى متى في الفصل العشرين من إنجيله عن المسيح عليه السلام أنه قال: "يا رب إن أمكن صرف هذا الكأس عني فاصرفها عني لكن<sup>1</sup> ما تشاء أنت لا ما أشاء". يعني بالكأس المنية، وهذه غاية التضرع والخشوع. وقال ماركس في الفصل الحادي عشر من إنجيله إن المسيح قال لتلاميذه حين<sup>2</sup> سألوه عن الساعة التي هي القيامة: "إن ذلك اليوم وتلك<sup>3</sup> الساعة لا يعرفها<sup>4</sup> أحد ولا الملائكة<sup>5</sup> الذين في السماء ولا الابن أيضاً يعرفه، لكن الآب وحده يعرف ذلك". فهذا إقرار منه بأنه منقوص العلم وأن الله أعرف وأعلم منه وأنه غيره.

12V

قال ماركس في الفصل الثامن من إنجيله إن المسيح قال: "إني لم أجد لأخدم بل لأخدم". فنسأل النصارى عن صاحب هذه الأقاويل: هل هو الأزلي الخالق أو هو إنسان مخلوق؟ فإن قالوا: "بل إنسان مخلوق مبعوث"، وافقونا في شريعة إيمانهم وخرجوا من دينهم، وإن زعموا<sup>6</sup> أن المقرّب تلك المعاني التي ذكرناها وبينناها هو الخالق الأزلي، خرجوا عن إيمان الأنبياء وقضية الحكماء، وقادهم قولهم هذا إلى أن يجعلوا الأزلي الخالق منقوص العلم، متهم<sup>7</sup> بالخبر، مجروح الشهادة، محتاج إلى من يعطيه<sup>8</sup> الحياة ويشهد له بصحة دعواه ويتملقه ويترضاه، لقول المسيح في نفسه ما قاله كما حكيت عنه آنفاً في هذا الباب، وإلى أن يصير أحد الإثنين واهباً والآخر موهوباً له، وأحدهما عبداً خادماً والآخر معبوداً مخدوماً، وأحدهما تام العلم والقدرة<sup>9</sup> والآخر ناقصاً عن مداه. وهذا أشنع ما يكون من المحال والوهم وأشر ما يكون من رؤيا الصانعات والزور، وأقبح ما يكون من قول الدهرية والمجوس، لأنه إن كان الابن<sup>9</sup> والروح هذا مثل الآب في قدرته وخلقته فهو<sup>10</sup>

13r

<sup>1</sup>A and B: ليكون. <sup>2</sup>B: حتى. <sup>3</sup>A: ومالك. <sup>4</sup>A: يعرفه. <sup>5</sup>A and B: الملائكة. <sup>6</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>7</sup>B: منهم. <sup>8</sup>B: تعطيه. <sup>9</sup>A and B: قول. <sup>10</sup>C, p. 51: فهم.

In Chapter 20 of his Gospel Matthew relates that Christ (peace be upon him) said, 'O Lord, if it is possible to take this cup from me then take it from me, but let be what you will, not what I will.'<sup>56</sup> By the cup he means death, and this is the utmost of entreating and humility. In Chapter 11 of his Gospel Mark says that Christ said to his disciples when they asked him about the Hour, which is the resurrection, 'This Day and Hour none knows it, not even the angels who are in heaven, nor does the Son know it, but only the Father alone knows it.'<sup>57</sup> This is his acknowledgment that he had partial knowledge and that God was more discerning and knowledgeable than he, and was | other than him.

12v

In Chapter 8 of his Gospel Mark says that Christ said, 'I have not come to be served but to serve.'<sup>58</sup> We ask the Christians about the one who makes these statements: is he the eternal Creator or a created human? If they say, 'Well, a human created and sent', they agree with us in their Creed and they abandon their religion. But if they claim that the one making these points which we have mentioned and explained is the eternal Creator, they abandon the faith of the prophets and the proposition of the wise. These words of theirs lead them to make the eternal Creator lacking in knowledge, suspect in word, challenged in testimony, needing someone to give him life, to witness for him about the rightness of his claim and to flatter him and try to please him, because of the words of Christ that he says about himself, as I have related from him earlier in this section, and to one of the two being Giver and the other receiver, one of them being worshipper and servant and the other being worshipped and served, one of them being perfect in knowledge and power | and the other being incomplete in attaining it. This is the most atrocious impossibility and delusion, the most pernicious fantasy of invention and falsehood, and the most horrible utterance of the materialists and Magians.<sup>59</sup> For if the Son and this

13r

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<sup>56</sup> Matthew 26:39.

<sup>57</sup> Matthew 24:36||Mark 13:32.

<sup>58</sup> Mark 10:45.

<sup>59</sup> The term *dahriyya* ('materialists') is not often closely defined by Muslim authors of this period, though it is related to a sort of fatalism derived from the assumption that human destiny is affected by the course of time and nothing more (cf. Q 45:24). An implication of this, that the world is independent of God, in 'Alī's mind identifies this group as dualistic and therefore similar to Persian Zoroastrians.

ثلاثة آلهة قدماء<sup>1</sup> كما قالت هذه الشريعة. فإلّا الذي جعل الآب أحقّ بخدمتهما وطاعتهما من أن يكون هو نفسه يطيعهما ويخدمهما إذا كان لا تفاضل بينهما في شيء من الأشياء؟ وإن كان بينهم تفاضل فالإبن والروح دون الله في القدرة والقدم. فإن<sup>2</sup> ذكرُوا أنّ قائل هذه الأقاويل هو إنسان مخلوق، خالفوا شريعة إيمانهم وخلعوها وانسلخوا منها.

أما ترون يا<sup>3</sup> جماعة النصارى، يهديكم الله، إنّّا كيفما<sup>4</sup> أدركنا الدوائر استدارت على الدوائر المحدودة المذمومة<sup>5</sup>، وسأقت إمّا لمخالفة الإنجيل وإمّا إلى خروج عن المفهوم والمعقول أو إلى الكفر بشريعة إيمانكم<sup>6</sup>.

وهذا القول كلّهُ يلزم اليعقوبية الذين يقولون إنّ المسيح هو الله وإنّ مريم والدة الله. وأمّا ما يلزم من القول بالمساكنة واللزوم والاتحاد، فإنّه إنّ كان الخالق الأزليّ قد سكن<sup>7</sup> في يسوع المسيح وصار نزيلاً له وضيئاً حتى لا فرق بينهما في شيء من الأشياء، فقد قال المسيح بما يتنافى صدر الكتاب. فشهادة الله إذاً على ما قال باطلاً، وليس عنده علم الساعة، ولا له القدرة على هذه الدرجات

<sup>1</sup>A and B: قدماء; cf. C, p. 51. <sup>2</sup>B: فإذا. <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>B: تأليف ما. <sup>5</sup>B omits this word. <sup>6</sup>A

and B: إيمانهم. <sup>7</sup>A and B: ممكن.



Spirit are like the Father in his power and creativeness then he is three eternal gods, as this Creed says. But who made the Father more worthy of the service and obedience of the other two rather than him obeying and serving them, if there is no disparity between him and them in anything? And if there is a disparity between them, then the Son and Spirit are inferior to God in power and eternity. If they say that the one who said these things<sup>60</sup> was a created human, they oppose their Creed, and repudiate and abandon it.

You Christians, may God guide you, can you not all see that however we spin the circles, they will revolve in restricted and disagreeable ways, and lead | either to disagreement with the Gospel or to abandonment of what is understood and considered reasonable, or else to disbelief in your Creed?<sup>61</sup>

13v

The statement as a whole is particularly pressing upon the Jacobites, who say that Christ was God and that Mary was the bearer of God.<sup>62</sup> And as for what the teaching about indwelling, adherence and uniting<sup>63</sup> make pressing, well, if the eternal Creator came to dwell in Jesus Christ and became his occupant and guest so that there was no distinction of any kind between them, then Christ must have said things that make the first part of the Book self-contradictory.<sup>64</sup>

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60 The statements quoted at the beginning of this seventh question.

61 This is the core of 'Alī's contention, that the obvious meaning of the Gospel and what is reasonable, both of which agree in essentials, are explicitly or potentially contradicted by the Creed.

62 In the Jacobites' view, as 'Alī sees it, God himself would be making the statements quoted at the beginning of the question in which Christ is shown to be different from and subordinate to God. 'Alī would be particularly sensitive to the teaching that Mary was God-bearer (he uses here the term *wālidat Allāh*), which was accepted by miaphysites but vehemently rejected by diophysites, his form of Christianity as a Nestorian before he had converted.

63 These terms were used in various Christological explanations, emerging from attempts to retain some distinction between the divine and human natures in Christ. The term *musākana* describes the Nestorian model of the divine nature indwelling the human, though the other terms, *luzūm* (not known elsewhere, and possibly a scribal error for *nuzūl*; see pp. 102, 120, 124, 126, 134 below) and *ittiḥād*, could be used by any of the main denominations.

64 Assuming that nothing has been omitted by the copyist at this point, 'Alī's argument appears to be that if God had united with Christ in a real sense, in some of Christ's utterances God would have been making statements that denied his omnipotence and omniscience, and the Gospel (assuming that is what is meant here by *Kitāb*, although it is not impossible that 'Alī means the Christian Bible as a whole) would be shown to be inconsistent. The reading in the MS could actually be *bimā bayyana fī ṣadr al-kitāb* rather than *bimā yatanāfā ṣadr al-kitāb*, though this would make it difficult to derive a coherent meaning from the passage.

والكرامات، وهذا هو الكفر المحض.<sup>1</sup> فإن لم يكن قائل ذلك خالقاً أزلياً،<sup>2</sup> فهو إذاً كما قلنا مخلوق مبعوث، وهذا بون عظيم وبعيد وفرقان ظاهر: يزعمون أنه لا بينونة بينهم ولا فرقان، وهو يقول: "إن الساعة لا يعرفها إلا بن أيضاً لكن الآب 14r وحده".

فهذه السبع المسائل المسكتات كافية لمن نصح نفسه ولم يقدم على الإحصار والأوجال، وهي ترتب وتعدل من خالف<sup>3</sup> المسيح ونسب<sup>4</sup> إليه ما هو منه بريء، وفرقه بما ليس في كتابه، وأنا أبرأ إلى الله عز وجل من شناعة هذا المعنى، وقبيح ما يتولد من شريعة النصارى وقبيح اعتقادهم.

وأزيدكم أيضاً إيضاحاً وشرحاً، أرجو أن يزيد<sup>5</sup> الله به الحق تأكداً ووجوباً، ويزيد الباطل تهديماً واندثاراً، وأجعل ذلك إثني عشر وجهاً، لا اختلاف بيننا وبينكم فيها، وأتأدب في ذلك بما قال الله عز وجل في محكم كتابه: ﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئاً وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضاً أَرْبَاباً مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ﴾.

14v الوجه الأول من الوجوه التي توافقوا عليها أن الله تعالى قديم فرد لا شريك له في ملكه ولا ند.

الوجه الثاني أن الله لا يغفر أن يُشرك به وهو الغني الحميد.

الوجه الثالث أنه لا أب له ولا أم ولا خالات ولا أنساب ولا أتراب.

الوجه الرابع أنه لا يُذرع ولا يوزن<sup>8</sup> ولا يحيط به مكان.

<sup>1</sup>B: المنخص. <sup>2</sup>A and B: خالق أزلي. <sup>3</sup>B: خالق. <sup>4</sup>B: ونسبت. <sup>5</sup>B: يريد. <sup>6</sup>B: قال. <sup>7</sup>B omits this

word <sup>8</sup>B: يودن.

Thus, according to what he said, God's testimony must have been mistaken, and he does not have any knowledge of the Hour or any power over these marks of dignity or over miracles, and this is outright unbelief. But if the one who said this was not an eternal Creator then, as we have said, he was created and sent, and this is a great and considerable gap and clear distinction: they claim that there is no separation or distinction between them, though he says: 'Neither does the Son know | the Hour, but only the Father'.<sup>65</sup>

14r

These seven silencing questions are enough for anyone who is sincere in himself and is not prone to hesitations and fears. They present order and balance to those who oppose Christ and ascribe to him what he has no relation with, and separate him from what is not in his Book. I acquit myself before God, great and mighty, from the atrociousness of this matter, the vileness that accrues from the Creed of the Christians, and the vileness of their doctrine.

I will also add for you clarification and explanation, through which I hope God may will the truth as assurance and conviction, and extend the worthlessness into collapse and obliteration. I will do this in twelve points about which there is no difference between us and you, showing courtesy in it, as God, great and mighty, says precisely in his Book, 'Say: O People of the Book, come to a word that is common between us and you, that we do not worship anyone except God, we do not associate anything with him, and none of us takes any of ourselves as Lord in place of God'.<sup>66</sup>

The first of the points on which you agree is that God almighty is eternal and alone, without partner | or equal in his sovereignty.

14v

The second point is that God does not forgive associating with him, and he is the One beyond need, the all-praiseworthy.

The third point is that he has no father or mother or mother's sisters, no ancestors or contemporaries.

The fourth point is that he cannot be measured or weighed, and location cannot surround him.

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65 Matthew 24:36||Mark 13:32.

66 Q 3:64.

الوجه الخامس أنّه لا يقبل الزيادة ولا النقصان.

الوجه السادس أنّه لا يأكل ولا يشرب ولا يجوع ولا يشبع.

الوجه السابع أنّه لا يقال لشيء من خلقه في قامته وعدد أعضائه وخلقته.

الوجه الثامن أنّ الله لا يوصف كنهه ولا يصوره مصور.

الوجه التاسع أنّ الله لا يسأم ولا يملّ ﴿ولا تأخذه سنة ولا نوم﴾.

الوجه العاشر أنّه محيط بكلّ شيء علماً، ولا يخفى عليه خافية في أرض ولا في سماء.

الوجه الحادي عشر أنّه غلاب عزيز لا يُذل ولا يرهب.

الوجه الثاني عشر أنّ الله تعالى لا يبلى ولا يموت.

15r

فهذه إثني عشر وجهاً إتفقت الأمم الموجودة والأديان المسددة عليها أنّ الله لا يُعرف إلّا بها ولا يُعبّر بخلافها. فإنّ ذكر ذاكر خالقاً بخلاف هذه الوجوه فليعلم<sup>1</sup> السامع أنّه مبطل، وأنّ الموصوف بغير ما ذكرناه مخلوق وليس بخالق، وأنّه زمني وليس بأزليّ.

فالشاهد الأوّل على الله — كما قلنا — في التوراة، قال الله تعالى لموسى عليه السلام:<sup>2</sup> "إنّه لن يراني أحد فيحيا". وقال سبحانه لموسى: "لا تشبّهني بشيء ممّا في السماء وممّا في الأرض". وقال داود: "إنّ<sup>3</sup> حارس بني إسرائيل لا تأخذه سنة ولا نوم". وقال داود النبيّ عليه السلام عن الله عزّ وجلّ أنّه قال: "لست أكلاً لحم

<sup>1</sup>A and B: فيعلم. <sup>2</sup> عليه السلام: these two words are added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>This word is added in the margin in A.

The fifth point is that he does not endure increase or decrease.

The sixth point is that he does not eat or drink, does not hunger or eat his fill.

The seventh point is that he cannot be spoken of as something from his creation regarding his stature, the number of his limbs or his character.

The eighth point is that God's true being cannot be described, nor any fashioner fashion him.

The ninth point is that God does not tire or grow weary, 'and slumber and sleep do not affect him'.<sup>67</sup>

The tenth point is that he encompasses everything with knowledge, and nothing on earth or in heaven is hidden from him.

The eleventh point is that he is victorious, mighty, is not humiliated or frightened.

The twelfth point | is that God almighty does not grow old or die.<sup>68</sup>

15r

The present-day nations and the rightly-guided religions agree that only by these twelve points can God be known, and he cannot be construed through any divergence from them. So, if someone refers to a creator differently from these points, the hearer will know that he is mistaken and that any being who is characterised differently from what we have referred to is created and not Creator, temporal and not timeless.<sup>69</sup>

The first witness to God is in the Torah, as we have said: God almighty said to Moses (peace be upon him), 'No one can see me and live'.<sup>70</sup> The blessed One said to Moses, 'You shall not liken me to anything that is in heaven or on earth'.<sup>71</sup> David said, 'The Guardian of the People of Israel is not touched by slumber or sleep'.<sup>72</sup> And the prophet David (peace be upon him) said about God, great and

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67 Q 2:255.

68 While there are only one or two direct allusions to the Qur'an in this list, each point obviously expresses a typically qur'anic conception of God.

69 'Alī's method here, to establish general and apparently neutral criteria by which the correct understanding of God can be agreed, recalls the procedure followed by his elder contemporary, the Melkite Christian Theodore Abū Qurra; see I. Dick (ed.), *Traité de l'existence du Créateur et de la vraie religion*, Rome, 1982, pp. 179–198; trans. J. Lamoreaux, *Theodore Abū Qurrah*, Provo, 2005, pp. 168–174.

70 Exodus 33:20.

71 Exodus 20:4.

72 Psalm 121:4, with echoes from Q 2:255.

العجاجيل ولا شارباً من دماء الجدى"، فقال داود: "ملكوتك يا ربّ إلى  
 15v دهر الدهرين وسلطانك إلى أبد الآبدين". وقال داود: "إنّ ربنا عظيم وله الحمد  
 المرضي التام ولا نهاية إذاً لجلاله". وقال يوحنا في الفصل الأوّل من إنجيله: "إنّ  
 الله لم يره<sup>1</sup> أحد قط". وقال يوحنا في الفصل التاسع من إنجيله إنّ المسيح قال  
 لبني إسرائيل: "تريدون قتلي وأنا رجل قلت لكم الحقّ الذي سمعتُ الله تعالى  
 يقوله". وقال يوحنا في الفصل الثاني عشر من إنجيله: "إنّ المسيح رفع بصره إلى  
 السماء وتضرّع إلى الله وقال إنّني أشكرك على إستجابتك دعائي وأعترف لك  
 بذلك، وأعلم أنّك في كلّ وقت تجيب دعائي، لكنني أسألك من أجل هذه  
 الجماعة ليؤمنوا<sup>2</sup> بأنك أنت أرسلتني". فأبى تضرّع واستكانة وإذعان أكبر من هذا،  
 وإنّما قال ذلك في الرجل الذي أقامه من بين الموتى. وقال يوحنا في الفصل  
 16r الخامس من إنجيله إنّ المسيح قال لليهود: "ما تؤمنون وأنتم تلتمسون الحمد من  
 بعضكم بعضاً، حمد الله الذي يُعبد ولا تبتغون"<sup>3</sup>. وقال بولص في رسالته إلى  
 طيماتقيوس<sup>4</sup>: "لله ملك العوالم والدهور الذي لا يفسد ولا يُرى، وهو الله وحده  
 وله الكرامة والمجد إلى أبد الآبدين". وقال يوحنا في الفصل التاسع من إنجيله  
 إنّ المسيح قال لليهود: "أنتم تفعلون أفعال أبيكم. فقالوا: إنّنا لم نكن من الزنا،  
 وما لنا إلّا أب واحد وهو الله. فقال المسيح: لو كان أبوكم الله كنتم تحبّوني  
 لأنّي من عند الله خرجتُ وجئتُ وليس من تلقاء نفسي جئتُ ولكن هو  
 أرسلني. قال اليهود: ألسنا<sup>5</sup> بمصيّبين في قولنا<sup>6</sup> إنّك سامري وإنّ فيك شيطان؟  
 قال لهم: لست بمجنون ولكنني أكرّم أبي ولا أحبّ مدح نفسي بل مدح أبي  
 بأنّي أعرفه، فإنّ قلتُ إنّني لا أعرفه كنت كذاباً مثلكم، بل أعرفه وأتمسك

<sup>1</sup>A and B: يراه. <sup>2</sup>A and B: ليؤمنون. <sup>3</sup>A: تبتغوني; B: تبتغوني. <sup>4</sup>A: طيماتقيوس. <sup>5</sup>A and B: لسنّا.

<sup>6</sup>A: قلنا.

mighty, that he said, 'I do not eat the flesh of calves or drink the blood of kids'.<sup>73</sup> David said, 'Your kingdom, O Lord, is for ever and ever, and your authority for eternity of eternities'.<sup>74</sup> David said, | 'Our Lord is mighty, and to him is sufficient and perfect praise, and there is no end to his greatness'.<sup>75</sup> In Chapter 1 of his Gospel John says, 'No one has ever seen God at all'.<sup>76</sup> John says in Chapter 9 of his Gospel that Jesus said to the People of Israel, 'You wish to kill me, a man. I have told you the truth which I have heard God almighty speak'.<sup>77</sup> John says in Chapter 12 of his Gospel, 'Christ raised his eyes to heaven and entreated God, saying, "I thank you for answering my prayer. I acknowledge you in this, and I know that you answer my prayer at all times. But I ask you on behalf of all these, that they may believe it is you who have sent me"'.<sup>78</sup> What entreating, humility or submission could be greater than this, when he was saying this about a man whom he had raised from the dead?<sup>79</sup> John says in Chapter 5 of his Gospel that Jesus said to the Jews, 'How can you believe? You look for | praise one from another, but praise from God, who is to be adored, you do not seek'.<sup>80</sup> Paul says in his Letter to Timothy, 'God's is the kingdom of the worlds and ages, for he is not abased and cannot be seen; he is God alone, and to him be honour and glory for ever and ever'.<sup>81</sup> John says in Chapter 9 of his Gospel that Christ said to the Jews, "You perform the actions of your father." They said, "We do not come from adultery and we only have one Father, who is God." So Christ said, "If God were your Father, you would love me, because I have issued and come from God. It is not of my own accord that I have come, but it is he who has sent me." The Jews said, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and that Satan is in you?" He said to them, "I am not mad, but I honour my Father. I do not desire praise for myself but praise for my Father. I know him, and if I said I did not know him I would be lying, like you. But I know him, and I keep

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73 Psalm 50:13.

74 Psalm 145:13.

75 Psalm 145:3.

76 John 1:18.

77 John 8:40.

78 John 11:41–42.

79 Jesus makes this prayer just before raising Lazarus from the dead. 'Alī's point is that even when performing such a feat as this Jesus still acknowledges that God is greater than him.

80 John 5:44.

81 1 Timothy 1:17.

16v بأمره". وقال في رسالته إلى طيماتثيوس: "هو الله القوي وحده، وهو ملك الملوك وهو ربّ الأرباب الذي لا يفسد ولا يبديد وحده، وهو الذي يحلّ في النور الباهر الذي لا يقدر أحد أن يدنو منه، الذي لم يره أحد من الناس ولا يقدر أن يراه، وله الكرامة والسلطان إلى أبد الآبدين آمين".

وقال نسطورس رئيس النسطورية في تسييح لهم يقوم مقام الإيمان: "يا ربّ إذ نسجد ونسبحك ونكبرك يا أيّها الدائم والجوهر المستور الذي لا يدرك، يا ملك الملوك وربّ الأرباب الذي يحلّ في النور الباهر الذي لم يره أحد قطّ ولا يقدر أن يراه، فهو القدّوس وحده وله الحول والقدرة وحده الذي لا يموت وحده". فهذا إيمان موسى وعيسى وغيرهما من الأنبياء صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين. فنّ خالفهم ضلّ وخرج عن الحقّ، وخرج عن ولاية الله وجميع ما قاله الأنبياء، ووافق<sup>1</sup> لما 17r وصفناه من صفات الله. وفي الوجوه الإثني عشر المتقدم ذكرها، وكلّ ما قاله الأناجيل الأربعة، وما تكلم به الحواريون، تشهد بحقيقة ذلك.

وقد أقرّ المسيح عن نفسه أنّ له لحماً وعظماً<sup>2</sup>، فإنّ كان كما قال النصارى إنّّه خالق أزليّ فالتخلق الأزليّ إذا مذروع موزون<sup>3</sup>. ومنّ كان كذلك فإنّه<sup>4</sup> يقع عليه التجزئة<sup>5</sup> والتقطيع وما يُجزأ ويمسح من الأجسام. فإنّ النار تحرقه والماء يغرقه، والشاهد على المسيح أنّه كان غير ممتنع من التقطيع والتجزئة والمساحة، والإنجيل في قوله إنّ المسيح قُطعت غرلته وسُمرت يداه وطُعن في جنبه. ومنّ كان هكذا كان له أشباه ونظراء، ومنّ كانت له أشباه ونظراء فليس بإله حقّ ولا خالق الأشياء، والله عزّ وجلّ تعالى أن يوصف بهذه الصفات. 17v

<sup>1</sup>B: ووافق. The sense requires a negative verb to represent rejection. <sup>2</sup>A and B: لحم وعظم. <sup>3</sup>A

and B: مذروعاً موزوناً. <sup>4</sup>B: فان. <sup>5</sup>B: التجربة.



to his command.”<sup>82</sup> In his Letter | to Timothy he<sup>83</sup> says, ‘He is God alone, the powerful One, and he is the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone does not suffer corruption or pass away. He it is who dwells in dazzling light, whom none can come near, whom no human has seen or can see; to him is honour and power for ever and ever. Amen.’<sup>84</sup> 16v

Nestorius, head of the Nestorians, says in a hymn of praise that for them replaces the Creed, ‘O Lord, indeed we bow down and praise and exalt you; O you who are everlasting substance, concealed and unattainable; O King of kings and Lord of lords, who dwell in dazzling light, whom none at all has seen or can see. He alone is holy, he alone has might and power, who alone does not die.’<sup>85</sup> This is the faith of Moses, Jesus and the other prophets (may God’s blessings be upon them all). Whoever differs from them is in error and departs from the truth, and departs from the sovereignty of God and all that the prophets | have said, and stands opposed to the attributes of God we have given. What is in the twelve points mentioned earlier, and all that the four Gospels say and what the disciples spoke about witness to the truth of this. 17r

Christ declared of himself that he had flesh and bones, so if he was eternal Creator, as the Christians say, then the eternal Creator was measured and weighed. A being like this is susceptible to being divided and cut up, and what can be divided and separated is physical, so that fire can burn it and water submerge it. And the evidence about Christ is that he was not invulnerable to being cut up, divided and split up, and the Gospel in its teaching that Christ’s foreskin was cut, his hands were fastened with nails, and his side was pierced.<sup>86</sup> A being such as this would have peers and equals, and one who has peers and equals is not true God or the Creator of things. | God, great and mighty, is too exalted 17v

82 John 8:41–50.

83 The referent is John, but ‘Alī obviously means Paul, whom he names in relation to the previous quotation.

84 1 Timothy 6:15–16.

85 It is not unlikely that ‘Alī had memorised this prayer, in which can be seen elements of the quotation from 1 Timothy given above.

86 Luke 2:21, John 20:27, John 19:34.

لكن الموصوف بما وصفتهم عن المسيح ليس بخالق أزلي بل مخلوق، وليس برازق واهب بل موهوب مرزوق. فهذا مخالف الشروط التي شرطناها من صفات الله التي قدّمنا ذكرها، وإذا وضع أنّه مخلوق بطلت شريعة إيمان النصارى التي تقول إنه خالق أزلي.

وقد نطق الإنجيل الأول أنّ المسيح قصّ شعره وقلم أظفاره وذهب طولاً وعرضاً. وإن كان يسوع المسيح خالقاً أزلياً وقد بانت منه هذه الأجزاء وتفصلت من جسمه وانقطعت من كلّ وعادت رميمًا وتراباً، فالخالق الأزلي قد فسد بعضه وبقي بعضه على حاله. وما فسد بعضه فالفساد واصل إلى كلّ، وما كان له كلّ وبعض فهو جسم محدود محتاج إلى ما يحمله، وما كان كذلك فهو مفتقر وليس بغني ومخلوق وليس بخالق. وهذا خلاف الشرائط في الإلهية. فإن يكن الموصوف بهذه الصفات خالقاً أزلياً<sup>1</sup> [كانت]<sup>2</sup> شريعة الإيمان باطلة فإنّها تقول: "إن يسوع المسيح إله حقّ وإنّه خالق غير مخلوق". فتدبروا يا أهل المعاني والأذهان هذه المعاني واحذروا التهاون والإغترار.

فهذا يلزم يعقوبية الذين يقولون إنّ المسيح هو الله. فأما الحجّة على من قال بالمساكنة والحلول والاتحاد فإنّه لم يكن بين الأزلي الخالق وبين المسيح فرق لأنّهما اتحدا وتلاحما، والمقطوع غرلته والمقصوص شعره والمقلم أظفاره والمطعون في جنبه والمسمّر في يديه<sup>3</sup> والذي كُسرت أنيابه، وسال دمه، وخرجت نفسه هو الخالق الأزلي، لأنّه لا بينونة بينهما كما زعمتم ولا فرق. فإن لم يكن المفعول به ذلك أيضاً أزلياً خالقاً فهو إذاً إنسان عبد بن أمة. وفي هذا تفريق بين الله سبحانه وبين المسيح وفسخ لشريعة الإيمان.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: خالق أزلي. <sup>2</sup>This word is lacking in A and B, though is required by the sense of the sentence. <sup>3</sup>A and B: يداه.

to be characterised by these attributes, while the being who is characterised in the way that you do with Christ is not eternal Creator but created, and is not the Provider and Giver but a being who is given to and provided for. This differs from the specifications about God's attributes that we have already set out above. And if it is clear that he was created, the Creed of the Christians that says he is eternal Creator is proved wrong.

The First Gospel states that Christ cut his hair, pared his nails, and grew in height and size.<sup>87</sup> If Jesus Christ was eternal Creator and these parts were separated from him, divided off from his body, cut away from his whole and they returned to decay and dust, then part of the eternal Creator would have grown rotten and part would have remained in its condition. And what rots in part has rottenness affect its whole, and what has whole and parts is a body, limited and needing something to bear it, and what is like this is needy and not independent, created | and not Creator. This contravenes the provisions about Divinity, for if the being who is characterised by these attributes is eternal Creator the Creed is proved wrong, because it says: 'Jesus Christ is true God, and is Creator not created'. So, you who have minds and intellects, consider these points and beware of indifference and delusion.

18r

This presses upon the Jacobites, who say that Christ is God.<sup>88</sup> The proof against those who speak of indwelling, inherence and uniting<sup>89</sup> is that there cannot be any distinction between the eternal Creator and Christ because the two united together and became one flesh, and the being whose foreskin was circumcised, whose hair was cut, whose nails were pared, who was pierced in his side and had nails driven into his hands, whose teeth were broken, whose blood flowed and whose soul left him was the eternal Creator, because, as you claim, there was no difference or separation between them. But if | the one who experienced this was not eternal Creator, then he was human, a servant, the son of a maidservant. In this is a distinction between God, may he be blessed, and Christ, and the cancellation of the Creed.

18v

87 Ibn al-ʿAssāl, p. 54, surmises that this may be 'the Gospel of the infancy' (*Injil al-ṣubuwwa*). The nearest reference in the canonical Gospels is Luke 2:52.

88 The Jacobites were generally thought to hold that Christ's two natures were entirely one, so that the divine nature itself would have undergone the creaturely experiences which ʿAlī details.

89 These are presumably the Nestorians and Melkites, who employ these terms to explain how Christ's two natures remained distinct.

وقد قال الإنجيل إنَّ المسيح قد أكل وشرب، وقام ونام وجاع، وذهب وهرب من الموت، وسهر كذلك وعرق عرقاً كمثّل غييط الدم. فإنَّ كان الموصوف بهذه الصفات والأعراض هو الأزلّي الخالق، فالأزلّي الخالق إذاً قد أكل وشرب وغطا وبال ويعتريه الفرق ويستويه القلق ويترشّح من جبينه العرق. وما كان كذلك فهو بخلاف تلك الشرائع المشترطة<sup>1</sup>، وليس بخالق أزلّي بل مخلوق.

والحجّة أيضاً على مَنْ يقول بالمساكنة والاتحاد فإنّه إنَّ لم يكن بين الأزلّي الخالق وبين يسوع المسيح فرق<sup>2</sup> في شيء | من الأشياء، فالأزلّي الخالق إذاً قد أكل بأكل يسوع المسيح، وجاع بجوعه، وبكى ببكائه، وهرب بهربه، وقُتل بقتله. وهذا من أشنع ما يكون من الفريّة والإفتتان، وأشدّ ما يكون من التصغير لعظمة ذي الجلال والإكرام.

فإنَّ جحد جاحد أن يكون المسيح قد اعترته هذه الأعراض التي ذكرناها لنزيه<sup>3</sup> بالإنجيل، لأنَّ متى قال في الفصل الثاني من إنجيله إنَّ المسيح صام أربعين يوماً لبلياليها ثمَّ جاع آخر ذلك. ويقول متى في آخر هذا الفصل العاشر من إنجيله إنّه إنتقل من هناك وسار إلى مدينته. ويقول لوقا في آخر إنجيله في الفصل الحادي والعشرين إنَّ المسيح لما حلَّ به الأمر وضاق للخوف ذرعاً كان يصلي مجهداً<sup>4</sup> ويعرق عرقاً كالدّم. وقال ماركس في الفصل الثالث من إنجيله إنَّ المسيح كان نائماً على وسادة في السفينة فدنا منه التلامذة وأنبهوه. فأتي بيان وشرح يكون أعظم من هذا؟ فأما تلك المعاني التي تقدّم<sup>5</sup> ذكرها فكثيرة.

تقدّمت: A and B: مجتهداً: B: 4. لزيه: B: 3. فرقا: A: 2. فرقا: A: 2. المشتطة: A and B: 1

The Gospel says that Christ ate and drank, got up, went to sleep, was hungry, walked, tried to escape death, kept vigil and in this way broke out in perspiration like dense blood.<sup>90</sup> If the being who was characterised by these attributes and symptoms was the eternal Creator, then the eternal Creator ate, drank, defecated, urinated, was seized by fear, was overcome by apprehension, perspired from his forehead. A being such as this differs from these established criteria, and is not eternal Creator but created.

The proof also applies to those who talk of indwelling and uniting, because if there is no difference of any | kind between the eternal Creator and Jesus Christ, then the eternal Creator must have eaten as Jesus Christ ate, been hungry through his hunger, cried through his crying, escaped as he escaped, and was killed through his being killed. This is the most atrocious lying and self-deception possible, and the most serious debasing of the greatness of One who is mighty and noble. 19r

If someone denies that these conditions we have mentioned affected Christ, we can show this through the Gospel, because Matthew says in Chapter 2 of his Gospel that Christ fasted forty days and nights, and afterwards was hungry.<sup>91</sup> And Matthew says at the end of Chapter 10 of his Gospel that he left that place and went to his own town.<sup>92</sup> And Luke says at the end of his Gospel in Chapter 21 that when the situation pressed upon him and he was hemmed in by doubt, Christ was praying wearily and sweating drops as though of blood.<sup>93</sup> Mark says in Chapter 3 of his Gospel that Christ was sleeping on a pillow in the boat when the disciples went up | to him and roused him.<sup>94</sup> What evidence and explanation can be more impressive than this? And the items that have been mentioned earlier, they are many.<sup>95</sup> 19v

90 Luke 22:44. The term *ghabīt*, which is not Arabic, appears to be derived from the Syriac *‘abīṭā*, meaning ‘dense’, ‘thick’.

91 Matthew 4:2.

92 Matthew 13:53–54.

93 Luke 22:44.

94 Mark 4:38–39.

95 ‘Alī means the many verses referring to Christ’s humanity he has quoted earlier in the refutation.

وقد قال قوم من النصارى إنّ الله لما أراد بنزوله ورجوعه إلى السماء أن يشرف بذلك جنس الناس حقيقةً. ولئن كان صعود إنسان واحد إلى السماء شرفاً بهذا لأهل الأرض أجمعين لأنّ انحطاط خالق الدنيا ونزوله لمحاربة الشيطان وإمكانه إياه من نفسه حتى قُتل عاراً<sup>1</sup> ومنقصة لأهل السماوات والأرض. ويقول متى في الفصل الثاني من إنجيله إنّ روح القدس ساق يسوع المسيح ليمتحنه الشيطان وإنه ظلّ يتردد مع الشيطان في البرّ صائماً أربعين يوماً لبلياليها، وإنه حضره ذلك الذي يمتحنه فقال له: "إن كنت ابن الله فقل لهذه الصخرة تصير خبزاً". فقال له المسيح مجيباً له: "إنه مكتوب أنّ حياة الإنسان لا تكون بالخبز بل بكلّ كلمة تخرج من فم الرب"، يريد الله. ثم ساقه الشيطان إلى مدينة القدس وأقام على شفير الهيكل وقرنه<sup>2</sup> [وقال له: "إن كنت ابن الله، فأرم بنفسك من ههنا، فإنه مكتوب أنّ الملائكة توكل بك لئلا تتعثّر رجلك]<sup>3</sup> بالحجر". قال له المسيح: "ومكتوب أيضاً لا تجرب الرب إلهك". ثم ساقه الشيطان إلى جبل عالٍ شامخ وأراه جميع ممالك الدنيا وزخرفها وقال: "إن خررت ساجداً على وجهك لي جعلتُ هذا كلّك لك". فقال له المسيح: "أعرب أيها الشيطان فإنه مكتوب أسجد للرب إلهك ولا تعبد شيئاً سواه". فلما سمع الشيطان ذلك تركه، وحضرته الملائكة لخدمته.

فإن كان المفعول به ذلك هو الخالق الأزليّ، فقد تردد الخالق الأزليّ<sup>4</sup> إذاً مع الشيطان وأتبعه، وسار معه ليمتحنه الشيطان. فإن لم يكن المفعول به ذلك خالقاً أزليّاً، بطل ما في شريعة الإيمان التي تقول: "إنّ المسيح خالق أزليّ وإله<sup>5</sup> حق".

<sup>1</sup>A and B: عاراً. <sup>2</sup>B: وقرنه. <sup>3</sup>A and B lack the sentence in brackets: رجلك. It is

supplied by Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 92. <sup>4</sup>B repeats the sentence: فقد تردد الخالق الأزليّ. <sup>5</sup>B:

والد.

Some among the Christians say that when God willed his descent and return to heaven he was truly honouring the human race.<sup>96</sup> But the ascension of one man to heaven could not be an honour to all the people of the earth, because the coming down of the Creator of the world and his descent to do battle with Satan, and the latter's power over his very being until he was killed, was shame and dishonour for the inhabitants of heaven and earth.<sup>97</sup> Matthew says in Chapter 2 of his Gospel that the Holy Spirit led Jesus Christ away for Satan to tempt him, and that he was disputing with Satan in the desert, fasting for forty days and nights, and the one tempting him came to him and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God then tell this rock to become bread.' But Christ answered | him, 'It is written, the life of man is not by bread but by every word that comes out of the mouth of the Lord', by which he meant God. Then Satan led him to Jerusalem and set him on the perimeter and angle of the Temple. And he said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, then throw yourself down from here. For it is written, "The angels will protect you lest you strike your foot on the stone".' Christ said to him, 'It is also written, "You must not put the Lord your God to the test".' Then Satan led him to a high and lofty mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth and their riches. And he said, 'If you fall down bowing on your face to me, I will give all this to you.' But Christ said to him, 'Begone, Satan, for it is written, "Bow down to the Lord your God, and do not worship anything other than him".' When Satan heard this he left him, and angels attended to serve him.<sup>98</sup>

20r

If the one who underwent this was the eternal Creator, then the eternal Creator disputed with Satan and followed him, and went with him so that Satan could tempt him. But if the one who underwent this was not eternal Creator, then what is in the Creed that says | Christ was eternal Creator and true God is proved wrong.

20v

96 This would be traditional Christian teaching, exemplified in Hebrews 2:9–15.

97 This mythological explanation of the Incarnation is made much of by 'Alī's elder contemporary al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, pp. 317.8–318.5.

98 Matthew 4:1–11.

فأما على الملكية، والنسبورية—وهم الجرامية—من هذه الحجة فمثل ما على أولئك، لأنهم فيما يزعمون أنه لا فرق فيما بين المسيح وبين الله في شيء من الأشياء. فقد تردّد الخالق الأزليّ وسار مع الشيطان، ودعاه الشيطان إلى عبادته وأن يسجد له. وإن لم يكن المتردّد المنساق معه الخالق الأزليّ، فهو إذا عبد بن أمة، فهذا تفريق بينهما بين. فكيف زعموا أنه لا<sup>2</sup> بينونة بينهما ولا فرقان؟ فمن فكر في هذا الباب وحده وأنعم النظر والتدبير ثم لم يرتدع ولم يتضح ذلك الحق في قلبه فلا حاجة لله به.

وقد ذكروا أن سبب نزوله إنما كان لحلّ الناس من إصر الخطية، ثم زعموا أنه صار هو نفسه أسيراً، وجاء مغيباً للناس فصار مستغيثاً بالله من الشيطان، وجاء منقذاً للناس من الشيطان، واشتملته الأشرطة لأن الشيطان كرّ عليه بعد ذلك واختلسه واقتصره ودمدم عليه ثم قتله.

إنّ هذا القول<sup>3</sup> لمّا تكاد السموات أن تقع على الأرض من قبحه، وتذهل الأنفس من شناعته. وإن من عجب العجب اضطرار الخالق الأزليّ إلى أن أنزل ابنه الأزليّ من السماء، ثم يرسله إلى الشيطان على يدي روحه الأزليّة القاهرة ليمتحنه الشيطان ويهينه، أو من ذا الذي أوجب عليه ذلك؟ وما كان دركه ودرك خلقه فيه؟ وما أحسب<sup>4</sup> أن هاج هجا الله تبارك وتعالى مذ قامت الدنيا، ولا مدح الشيطان مادح أكثر ممّا يقوله النصارى من ذلك. وذلك أن مدار الشريعة والتساويح التي يقرؤها<sup>5</sup> في كل يوم على أن الله وإبنة وروحه صاروا إلى الشيطان ومعهم الملائكة والسمائيون وخيار أهل الأرض

<sup>1</sup>A and B: الملكية. <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>4</sup>B: احسبت.

<sup>5</sup>B: تقرؤها.



As for the Melkites and Nestorians, who are the *Jarāmīqa*,<sup>99</sup> concerning this argument, it is similar to what is against these,<sup>100</sup> because they effectively claim that there is no distinction of any kind between Christ and God. Thus, the eternal Creator disputed and went with Satan, and Satan called him to worship him and bow down before him. And if the one who disputed with him and was taken away with him was not the eternal Creator, then he was a servant, son of a maidservant, and this is a clear distinction between the two of them. So how can they claim that there is no interval between the two of them and no separation? Whoever thinks about this point alone and applies his thinking and reflection, and this truth is not restricted and made clear in his mind, he has no desire for God.

They have said that the reason for his descent was expressly to free people from the bonds of sin, and then they claim that he himself became a prisoner. He came to help people, but he had to call for help from God against Satan; he came to save people | from Satan, but the bonds bound him because after this Satan attacked him, stole up on him, carried him off, treated him violently, and then killed him. 21r

Indeed, the heavens almost fall to earth at the odiousness of these words, and spirits are dismayed at their hideousness. It is the most amazing thing that the eternal Creator should be forced to send down his eternal Son from heaven, and then hand him over to Satan through his holy and victorious Spirit so that Satan could tempt him and humiliate him. Who is it that forced him to do this? What was the achievement for him or for his creation in it? I reckon that since the world came into being no one has mocked God, blessed and almighty, or praised Satan more than this that the Christians say. This is that the central point of their Creed and the prayers which they recite every day are effectively that God, his Son and his Spirit moved against Satan, and with them the angels, the heavenly beings, and all the most excellent people of the earth. | They rose up to fight against Satan and restrain him, and to abolish sin 21v

99 This is a favourite term for Nestorians with al-Ṭabarī, who also uses it in the *Dīn wa-dawla* (see below, pp. 332–333, 336–337). It was used to designate an inhabitant of upper Mesopotamia, where Nestorians would be numerous.

100 The Jacobites.

أجمعين. ونهضوا لمحاربة الشيطان وقعه وإبطال الخطية، ورفع الموت عن الناس كافة، فلم يلتقوا ما أرادوا بل زادوا الشيطان تمرداً واجترأ على الله وأمناً من أخذه، لأنّ الشيطان لما سلم من أعدائه ودام على حاله حلى له الجو وصفا له الكدر، وأفرج عنه الروح، ولأنّ الحزن انجلب عن ابن الله فيما يقولون فصار أسيراً لهم قتيلاً.

والموصوف بهذا كلّ مخالف للشرائط التي اشترطناها من صفات الله عز وجلّ وبحقّ هدايته.<sup>2</sup> لأنّ في إنجيلهم أنّ المسيح قد لُفّ في الخرق، ووضع<sup>3</sup> في الملعف، وزار الوليمة تعاطياً بالحلية على ما قال يوحنا في إنجيله<sup>4</sup>، وغسل أقدام تلاميذه، وركب حماراً، وعلّق في خشبة، وكان له أنساب وأتراب كثيرة لا يُحصون، ولا يصف الواصفون ويصور المصور وتحيط به الأماكن ويتردّد وينام ويسأم. فإنّ كان يسوع المسيح هو الخالق الأزليّ، أو صار مع الخالق الأزليّ شيئاً واحداً لا فرق بينهما في شيء من الأشياء، فقد إلتفت على خالق الكل الخرق، وأحاطت بجسمه الأردية والسرايل<sup>5</sup>، ومنّ وسع كرسيه السموات والأرض وسعته<sup>6</sup> الأردية والملعف، والذي برأ النسمة وفلق الحبة زار الولايم ونادم اليهود وسُمّي نَجَّاراً وانتسب إلى إسم وإلى يوسف النجار كما يقول الإنجيل. والذي خلق الأفلاك والبحار والأنهار استقلّ به حمار ونبط من عود، والذي لا أوّل له ولا آخر له ولا ندّ ولا نظير، كان له مائة ألف نظير في خلقته وصورته وعدد سنيه وأيامه، الذي<sup>7</sup> ابتدع الأنفس والأبدان وبرأ الإستطاعات والبطش فتقتله شرذمة من اليهود متعبدة مأسورة. ومتى كان ذلك فهو مخالف لشرائط الله تعالى.

<sup>1</sup>B: ودفع. <sup>2</sup>B: بحقّ هدايته. <sup>3</sup>A: ورضع. <sup>4</sup>في إنجيله. these two words are added in the margin in

التي. <sup>5</sup>B: والسرايل. <sup>6</sup>B: وسعة. <sup>7</sup>A and B: التي.

and remove death from the whole of humanity. But they did not succeed in what they planned, and rather strengthened Satan in revolt and daring against God and in confidence from being captured, because when Satan was safe from his enemies and continued in his position, the air seemed sweet to him, worry cleared away from him, and fear left him, and because sadness took hold of the Son of God, as they say, so that he became a prisoner for them and was killed.

The being described by all of this is contrary to the conditions we have set out concerning the attributes of God, great and mighty, and in accordance with his guidance. For in the Gospel is that Christ was wrapped in cloths and placed in the manger,<sup>101</sup> he attended the wedding feast and, according to what John says in his Gospel, he was concerned about the provisions,<sup>102</sup> he washed his disciples' feet,<sup>103</sup> he rode on an ass,<sup>104</sup> he was hung on a cross, he had so many ancestors and relatives they could not be counted, described or portrayed,<sup>105</sup> locations encompassed him, he came and went, | he slept, and he was weary. So if Jesus Christ was the eternal Creator or became one with the eternal Creator with no separation between them of any kind, then cloths were wrapped around the Creator of all and cloaks and garments enveloped his body; for him whose throne is as wide as the heavens and earth,<sup>106</sup> cloaks and a manger were wide enough; he who created the living soul and broke open the seed attended wedding feasts and drank with the Jews; he was called carpenter and was related to a name and to Joseph the carpenter, as the Gospel says.<sup>107</sup> He who created the spheres, rivers and seas was carried on an ass and suspended from a pole;<sup>108</sup> he who has no beginning or end, no equal or similar, had a hundred thousand similar beings in his character and form and the number of his years and days; he who brought spirits and bodies into being and created Dominions and Powers was killed by a gaggle of fanatical and enthralled Jews. Whenever this took place, it is contrary | to the conditions of God almighty.

22r

22v

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101 Luke 2:7.

102 John 2:1–11.

103 John 13:3–5.

104 Matthew 21:7 and parallels.

105 Matthew 11:1–16; Luke 3:23–38.

106 Q 2:255.

107 Matthew 13:55.

108 The context appears to require the translation given, though the force of the verb *nabaṭa* here is unclear.

والحجة على الذين يزعمون أنهم لا يفرقون بين الآب والإبن والمسيح أنكم زعتم أن للمسيح أمّا وأخوالاً وقربات، وأنه ركب الحمار، وأكل وشرب وتغوط وبال، أفتقولون: إن الله أمّا وأخوالاً وأباً مثل إبراهيم وداود؟ فإن قالوا عن الله مثل ذلك لم يستحقوا جواباً ولا عتاباً، وإن لم يصفوا الله تعالى بهذه الصفات التي هي صفة المسيح، فقد فرقوا بين الله وبين المسيح أشدّ تفريق.<sup>2</sup> وإن لم يفرقوا بين الله تعالى وبين المسيح فيقولوا: "هذا كتاب مولود الله الأزلّي بن داود بن إبراهيم"، ولم يقولوا: "كتاب يسوع المسيح".

23r

وقد قالت اليعقوبية ومن أشبهها إن جميع ما نطق به إنجيلهم من أكل المسيح وشربه، وتغويطه وبوله وهربه، كان تخاييل وتماثيل.<sup>3</sup> ومن قال بهذا القول لزمه أن يجعل إنجيله كذباً وزوراً، ومن جاء به من الحواريين كذبة أفاكين. لأن من قال: "أكل وشرب، وتضرّع إلى الله وبكى" من غير أن يكون ذلك حقيقة وصدقاً فهو عند الناس كلهم من الكذبة المبطلين. وإن كان المسيح إلهاً خالقاً، ثم قال في نفسه إنه عبد وأنه مخلوق وإن له إلهاً، فقد كذب على نفسه، وموّه على الناس شأنه وأجأهم إلى الكفر.

وبه قال القوم إنه صام وصلى، وفعل تلك الأفاعيل ليعلم الناس ذلك، ولم تزل اليهود من قبله تصوم وتصلّي وتأكل وتشرب وتأمرها أنبياءها بالخير والبر، فما كانت<sup>4</sup> حاجتهم إلى تعليم ذلك بنفسه، وما كانت<sup>5</sup> حاجتهم إلى أن يتمثل لهم فيعلمهم التغويط والبول والنوم<sup>6</sup> والإشتغال والتردد مع الشيطان؟

<sup>1</sup>B: أفتقولون. <sup>2</sup>A and B: تفريقاً. <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>A and B: كان. <sup>5</sup>A and B: كان. <sup>6</sup>This

word is added in the margin in A.

The argument against those who claim that they do not make any distinction between the Father, the Son and Christ<sup>109</sup> is that you claim that Christ had a mother, uncles and relatives, that he rode on the ass, ate, drank, defecated and urinated: are you saying that God has a mother, uncles and a father, like Abraham and David? If they say such things about God, they do not deserve an answer or rebuke. And if they do not ascribe to God almighty these attributes, which are Christ's, they make a very definite distinction between God and Christ. And if they do not make any distinction between God almighty and Christ, they will be saying, 'This is the book of the descent of the eternal God, son of David and Abraham',<sup>110</sup> and not saying, 'The book of Jesus Christ'.

The Jacobites and those who are like them say that all their Gospel states about Christ eating, drinking,<sup>111</sup> defecating, urinating and running away were pretences and fantasies. Anyone who says this necessarily makes his Gospel a lie and falsehood, and the disciples who brought it | liars and cheats. For, anyone who says, 'He ate, drank, beseeched God and cried',<sup>112</sup> without this being true and sincere will be a liar and deceiver in the eyes of all people. And if Christ was God and Creator, and then said about himself that he was a servant, was created and had a God, he would have lied about himself and misrepresented his being to people, leading them into unbelief.

23r

People said about him that he fasted and prayed and performed these actions in order to teach people this.<sup>113</sup> But the Jews before him had never ceased from fasting and praying, eating and drinking, or their prophets commanding goodness and devoutness to them. So what was their need for him to teach this himself, and what was their need for him to become like them in order to teach them about defecating, urinating, sleeping and getting caught up with Satan and disputing with him?

109 These must be the miaphysite Jacobites, who were portrayed by Muslim polemicists as saying that Christ's divine and human natures became one at the Incarnation, and could therefore be represented as saying this.

110 Cf. Matthew 1.1.

111 Cf. Q 5:75.

112 This allusion to Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane later became a favourite example in Muslim polemic because of its clear reference to Jesus' subordination to God in his begging to be spared from death; see e.g. al-Māturīdī, *K. al-tawḥīd*, in Thomas, *Christian Doctrines*, pp. 100–103.

113 See al-Māturīdī, *K. al-tawḥīd*, in Thomas, *Christian Doctrines*, pp. 102–103.

فهذه مسائل لازمة ومعان مكشوفة. فقد رفعت عنها المستور فلا يدفعها من نظر  
 23v نفسه وسعى لمعاده ولا يغتر ولا يخلط، وكلها تعود إلى إبطال اشرية الإيمان،  
 وإما إلى إبطال الإنجيل وإما إلى التفرق بين المسيح وبين الله. وذلك نسخ لتأويل  
 تلك الأصناف كلها.

ولا أدري ما الذي دعى النصارى إلى أن يجعلوا أمور الدنيا والآخرة معكوسة  
 ومنكوسة! ولا أدري لمن افتتوا في ذلك من الأنبياء والحكماء! ومن ذا الذي دان  
 به منذ قامت الدنيا؟ لأن من قال إن اللحم والدم كان منهما الخالق، فصار الخالق  
 الأزلي لحماً ودماً، وصار القديم الذي لا نهاية له مشاهداً محدوداً مذروعاً، والذي  
 لا يموت صار ميتاً، والذي قد صلب ومات فيما يذكرون قد صار إلهاً لا أول له  
 ولا آخر؟

فقد قلب النصارى بهذا القول الأشياء كلها فجعلوا سافلها أعلاها. وهذا قول  
 من مسه خبل وغلبة أو عمى وسكر. ومتى زعموا عن المسيح أنه ابن داود ابن  
 24r إبراهيم وقد كان قبل داود وقبل إبراهيم وأنه خلقهما، فقد جعلوا الإبن المولود  
 جدّاً لأجداد، وأنه خالق لأبائه. وهذا أمر عظيم وحادث شنيع لا يسكن إليه  
 إنسان سوي ولا ذو عقل نقي. لأنهم يصيرون رجلاً قد أقرباً أنه إنسان، وأنه رجل  
 موهوب مبعوث، وأقروا تلامذته بمثل ذلك وقالوا إن الله أقامه من بين الموتى،  
 فيصيرونه خالقاً أزلياً.

ومن المحال أن يكون من لم يزل ولا يزول يرضى بأن يقال عنه أنه استحال لحماً  
 ودماً، واستفزه الشيطان واضطر به الحدثان إلى أن نزل من السماء وأنشأ هرباً ثم  
 انهزم عنه مغلوباً منكوباً ورجع إلى الموضع الذي خرج منه. فإن كان النصارى

مزروعاً.<sup>1B</sup>

These are compelling questions and obvious points. I have removed what is hidden from them so that anyone who makes an examination himself and attempts to do so positively, and is not blinded or making confusion, will not reject them. They all contribute towards disproving | the Creed or disproving the Gospel, or establishing a distinction between Christ and God. And this abolishes the exegesis of all these sects. 23v

I have no idea what drew the Christians to invert and reverse matters of this world and the world to come, and I have no idea from which of the prophets and sages they sought justification for it, nor who has believed it since the world has existed. For who has said that the Creator was of flesh and blood and that the eternal Creator became flesh and blood, that the eternal One who has no end became visible, limited and measured, that the One who does not die became mortal, and that the one who was crucified and died, according to what they say, became God, having no first or last?

In this teaching the Christians have overturned everything, making its low-  
 ermost its topmost. This is the teaching of one who has been smitten and struck  
 by insanity, or who is blind and drunk. When they claim that Christ was son of  
 David and son of Abraham,<sup>114</sup> but was | before David and before Abraham<sup>115</sup> 24r  
 and that he created them both, they make the son who is offspring grandfather  
 to grandfathers and creator of his ancestors. This is an enormity and atrocious  
 mishap about which no person who was right-minded or endowed with clear  
 reason could remain calm. For they make a man who acknowledged that he was  
 human and a man, recipient and sent, and whose disciples acknowledged sim-  
 ilar, saying that God raised him from the dead, they actually make him eternal  
 Creator.

It is impossible that he who has always been and always will be should allow  
 it to be said of him that he became flesh and blood, that Satan should make  
 him agitated, that calamities should force him to come down from heaven and  
 initiate rescue, and then that he should be put to flight, defeated and stricken,  
 and return to the place from which he started. If in this teaching the Christians

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114 Matthew 1:1

115 John 8:56–58.

نوجوا في هذا القول موافقة للمسيح، فإنّ المسيح يبرأ إلى الله أن تكون إرادته في تهجين الله وثلبه وتوهين | عظّمته وعزّه بأن يُقال فيه إنّه من جوهر الله القديم 24V وإنّه خالق الدنيا بكلّ ما فيها. وكيف يقول ذلك المسيح وهو معترف، وتلامذته مقرّون في أناجيلهم، بأنّ الله هو الذي بعثه إلى الدنيا، وأقامه من بين الموتى، وهو الذي أكرمه وعظّمه واصطفاه كما بيّنا وقدّمنا ذكره وفي التوراة والإنجيل وكلّ الكتب؟ فكيف يظنّون بخيرة الله وبخيبة المنسوب إلى كلمته وروحه أنّه بخيال العيان فيقول في نفسه ما يدلّ التنزيل على خلافه، وهو القائل في الإنجيل ما ذكره متى التلميذ: "ليس لي يا سيّدي مدخل في ملكوت السماء لكن من عمل بمرضاة أبي"، وهو القائل أيضاً: "إنّي ذاهب إلى أبي وأبيكم وإلهي وإلّهم؟" ويقول إنّ الله أرسلني وأعطاني، وكثير مثل هذا نطقت به الأناجيل كما قدّمت ذكره.

25r فإنّ قالت النصارى إنّ هذه المقالة والديانة، وإنّ كانت منكّرة فظيعة<sup>2</sup>، فهو دينه قد التقاه وتقلّدناه عن آبائنا وإنّ ربنا رحيم كريم، فالجواب إذاً ما صلّى عباده وسهروا وصاموا وتصدّقوا وكفّوا عن المظالم والعدوان، ولم يؤاخذهم بشيء وسوء. من قال بهذا القول كان على النصرانية واليهودية والمجوسية وغيرها إذا كان الإعتقاد ليس على معرفة الله والإيمان به بل على الإحسان، وهكذا قالت الدهرية وكثير من المجوس وغيرهم. وإذا نصّح النصارى أنفسهم علّهم أنّ الأمر ليس كذلك وأنّ من زعم أنّ من كان خالقه حجراً أو شجرة أو دابةً أو إنساناً<sup>3</sup> فاجتهد في عبادته ذلك الشيء، لم يُغنِ<sup>4</sup> صومه وصدّقته وعبادته<sup>5</sup> عنه شيئاً.

<sup>1</sup>B: كمد. <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>A and B: إنسان. <sup>4</sup>B: يعن. <sup>5</sup>This word is added in the margin in



have been given a secret in accordance with Christ, Christ cleared himself before God that his intention was to disparage or defame God or to impugn | his greatness and might by it being said that he was from the substance of the eternal God, or that he was Creator of the world with everything in it.<sup>116</sup> How could Christ say this when he was aware, and his disciples confirmed it in their Gospels, that it was God who sent him to the world and raised him from the dead, and it was he who honoured, glorified and chose him, as we have demonstrated and stated above, and as is in the Torah, Gospel and all the books?<sup>117</sup> How could they think of the goodness of God and of the defeat of the one who was related to his Word and Spirit,<sup>118</sup> that he was in evident fantasy so that he should say about himself things that were contrary to revelation, when he is the one who says in the Gospel that Matthew the disciple cites, 'To enter into the Kingdom of Heaven is not mine, sir, but the one who carries out my Father's good pleasure',<sup>119</sup> and also the one who says, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God',<sup>120</sup> and he says, 'God has sent me and has given to me',<sup>121</sup> and many similar things which the Gospels state, as I have mentioned above.

24v

If the Christians say, 'Even though this teaching and confession may be disagreeable and shocking, it is his religion which he imparted and we have copied from our ancestors; our Lord is merciful and generous, the response is then for his servants to pray, keep watch, fast, make charitable giving, keep away from wrongs and aggression, and not let any kind of resentment be harboured against them'; anyone who says such things may equally follow Christianity, Judaism, Magianism or anything else, as long as the authorisation is not from knowledge of God and belief in him but ability to act well. The materialists say as much, and the majority of Magians and others. And if the Christians are sincere with themselves, they will know that the situation is not like this, and that anyone who claims that his creator is a stone, a tree, an animal or a human, and devotes himself to worshipping this thing, his fasting, charitable giving, and worship of it will be of no avail.<sup>122</sup>

25r

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116 Q 5:116–117.

117 The other New Testament books.

118 There may be a faint allusion here to Q 4:171.

119 Matthew 7:21.

120 John 20:17.

121 John 16:15.

122 In 'Alī's eyes the Christians' pious protestation that they are only following the teachings they have been given signifies little, even though it is supported by praiseworthy conduct. They are no different from other misguided believers, because they fail to employ rational discrimination in determining correct belief.

25v وقد رأيتُ في شريعة النصارى | من التناقض والإفساخ ما أنا مبينه لهم وكاشف  
الغطاء عن شريعتهم التي لا يتم لهم قربان ولا نسك<sup>1</sup> إلا بها، وأذكر ما فيها من مخالفة  
الإنجيل وسائر الكتب. وإذا انكشف ذلك فسد الإيمان بها، وبدت لمن تميز منهم  
سائر القوم الذين يشرعوها، وقلة تحرّجهم وقلة إقدامهم على الأباطيل والبهت.  
فأول الشريعة ومساحتها:

نؤمن بالله الواحد الآب، مالك كل شيء، صانع جميع ما يرى وما لا يرى،  
وبالربّ الواحد يسوع المسيح ابن الله الواحد، بكر الخلائق كلّها، من أزمن  
أبيه قبل العوالم كلّها، ليس بمصنوع، إله حقّ من جوهر أبيه الذي بيده  
إنفقت العوالم كلّها، وخلق كل شيء، الذي من أجلنا، معشر الناس، ومن  
أجل خلاصنا نزل من السماء وتجسّد من روح القدس، وصار إنساناً،  
26r وحمل به ووُلد من مريم البتول، واتّجع وأولم وصلب في أيام فيلاطوس،  
ودُفن وقام في اليوم الثالث كما هو مكتوب، وصار إلى السماء وجلس عن  
يمين أبيه، وهو مستعد للمجيء تارة أخرى للقضاء بين الأموات والأحياء.  
ونؤمن بروح القدس الواحد الحي الذي يخرج من أبيه روحاً محييةً،  
ومعمودية واحدة لغفران الخطايا، وجماعة واحدة جاثليقية<sup>2</sup>، وبقيامة أبداننا  
وبالحياة الدائمة إلى أبد الآبدين.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: قرباناً ولا نسكاً. <sup>2</sup>A and B: جاء ثلاثة.

I have noticed in the Creed of the Christians | contradictoriness and cancellation which I will demonstrate to them. I will remove the covering from their Creed, without which no eucharist or act of worship is complete for them,<sup>123</sup> and I will refer to what is opposed to the Gospel and other books in it. If this is exposed, the faith will thereby be impaired, and all the people who propagate it will be made plainly visible to those of them with discrimination, and also their lack of restraint and lack of courage against trivialities and falsehood. The beginning and content of the Creed is:<sup>124</sup>

We believe in one God, the Father, Possessor of all things, Maker of all that is seen and unseen.

And in the one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, first-born of all creatures, of the ages of his Father before all worlds, not made, true God<sup>125</sup> from the substance of his Father, through whom all the worlds were brought into being, and who created all things; who for the sake of all us humans and for the sake of our salvation came down from heaven and became incarnate from the Holy Spirit and became human; he was borne and given birth to by the Virgin Mary; he was afflicted, suffered and was crucified | in the time of Pilate; he was buried and rose on the third day, as is written; he went up to heaven and is seated at the right hand of his Father; he will come again to judge between the dead and the living.

We believe in the one Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of life who proceeds from his Father, a life-giving Spirit; in one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; in one Catholic Church; in the resurrection of our bodies, and in everlasting life without end.

<sup>123</sup> The contradiction between the Creed as the main summary of Christian faith and the scripture on which it is nominally founded is made all the more serious by the prominence of the Creed in Christian doctrine and public worship.

<sup>124</sup> Gaudeul, *Riposte*, pp. v–vi, shows that this version of the Creed closely reflects that of Theodore of Mopsuestia, whom Nestorian Christians looked on as a prime exponent of their doctrines. It would be natural for ‘Alī, as a former Nestorian, to quote it.

<sup>125</sup> As Gaudeul *Riposte*, p. vi, points out, the words ‘true God from true God’ are missing from this version of the Creed, though since they are repeatedly quoted elsewhere in the *Radd*, including the paragraph immediately following, this must be a copyist’s error.

فهذه الشريعة تجتمع على الإيمان بها وتبذل المهج دونها جماهير النصارى من<sup>1</sup> الملكية واليعقوبية والنسطورية. ولا يشدّ عنها إلا الجزء الأقلّ من النصارى. فإذا وضع فسادها وغشّ من ألفها وجب على كلّ من يتضح له ذلك من النصارى أن يتدبّر ذلك بعين الصحّة والنصيحة والمحبة لله عزّ وجلّ<sup>2</sup> وللنبي، وأن يترك الججاج والتقليد.

لأنّ أوّل الشريعة: "نؤمن بالله الواحد"<sup>3</sup> الآب مالك كلّ شيء صانع ما يرى وما لا يرى. ثمّ حذفوا ذكر الله عندها واستأنفوا ذكرها وقالوا: "نؤمن بالربّ الواحد يسوع المسيح، إله حقّ<sup>4</sup> من إله حقّ من جوهر أبيه". فهذا نقض الأوّل من قولهم لا يخيّله ذو نصفه<sup>5</sup> وفهم، لأنّهم قالوا: "نؤمن بالله الواحد"، ثمّ قالوا عقبى ذلك وعلى نسقه: "ونؤمن بأنّ يسوع المسيح هو خالق الأشياء كلّها بيده". فأثبتوا هاهنا خالقاً آخر غير الخالق الأوّل. وهذا<sup>6</sup> أيضاً تناقض لا يخيّله ذو نصفه وفهم،<sup>7</sup> لأنّ معنى التناقض أن يكون الكتاب والكلام مختلفاً، يكذب بعضه بعضاً، ويخبر أوّله بخلاف آخره. وكلّ كتاب أو كلام إذا كان يكذب نفسه فلا حاجة لمكذّبه إلى استشهاد غيره إليه.

والوجه الثالث: أنّهم قالوا في أوّل الشريعة: "نؤمن بإله خالق ما يرى وما لا يرى"، ثمّ قالوا بعقب ذلك إنّ يسوع المسيح خالق كلّ شيء وإنّه غير مصنوع. وقد جعلوه في القول الأوّل مصنوعاً، وأدخلوه في جملة المخلوقين في قولهم إنّ الله خالق جميع ما يرى وما لا يرى. فهذا تجاهل وتناقض لا يخيّله ذو نصفه<sup>8</sup> وفهم.

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>A and B: الحق. <sup>4</sup>B: لا نجيّله ذو.

لا نجيّله ونصفه. <sup>5</sup>B omits this word. <sup>6</sup>A and B: تناقضاً. <sup>7</sup>B: لا نجيّله ... وفهم.

وفهم.

All the Christians, Melkites, Jacobites and Nestorians, are united in belief of this Creed and sacrifice their very selves for it. Only a very small number of the Christians are distanced from it. Thus, if its pointlessness and the deceit of those who composed it are made clear, then all the Christians to whom this is made clear will be compelled to reflect on this with the utmost candour and sincerity, and with dedication to God, great and mighty, | and to Christ, and they will have to abandon obstinacy and unquestioning imitation. 26v

The beginning of the Creed is, 'We believe in one God, the Father, Possessor of all things, Maker of what is seen and unseen'. And then, with this they stop referring to God and begin with a new reference, saying, 'We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, true God from true God, of the substance of his Father'. But this is a contradiction of the first part of what they say, and no one with any justness or understanding will think this fanciful. For they say, 'We believe in one God', and then immediately after this and in the same way they say, 'We believe that Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things by his hand'. In this they affirm another Creator different from the first Creator. This is also another contradiction, which no one with any fairness or understanding will think fanciful, because the meaning of contradiction is that one part of something written or spoken disagrees with another part and denies it, and that its beginning tells something contrary to its end. For every written or spoken thing that denies itself, there is no need for the one who denies it to refer to anything beside it.

The third point is that they say at the beginning of the Creed, | 'We believe in a God who is Creator of what is seen and unseen', and then they say immediately after this that Jesus Christ is Creator of all things and is not made. In the first statement they make him made, and include him among things that are created when they say that God is Creator of all that is seen and unseen. This is ignorance and self-contradiction, and no one with justness or understanding will think this fanciful. 27r

الوجه الرابع: أنهم قالوا فيها إنَّ يسوع المسيح إله حقّ من إله حقّ، من جوهر أبيه، وقد أقرَّ يسوع المسيح<sup>1</sup> أنه لحم ودم وعظم. فإنَّ كان إلهاً حقّاً من جوهر أبيه، فإنَّ الله تعالى إذا لحم ودم وعظم، تعالى الله عن ذلك علواً كبيراً. وفي هذا تناقض ونسخ لشريعة الإيمان. ولو أنَّ مشيراً أشار إلى الظلمة فقال: "إنَّها من جوهر الشمس" كذبناه. ولو أشار إلى النار المتوقّدة فقال: "إنَّها من جوهر الثلج" كذبناه. فكذلك من قال: "إنَّ الجسم المذروع الموزون من جنس لا يُذرع ولا يوزن ولا يتناهى" كذبناه واسترذلنا قوله، وكنا معذورين في مهاجرة رأيه ومعاينة من تمسّك بمثله.

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الوجه الخامس: أنهم قالوا في الأمانة إنَّ يسوع المسيح بكر الخلاق وليس بمصنوع، فكأنَّهم قالوا إنَّه مخلوق وليس بمخلوق، لأنَّ بكر الخلاق لا يكون إلّا من الخلاق، كما أنَّ بكر الإنسان لا يكون إلّا من إنسان<sup>2</sup> أو باكورة الثمار لا تكون إلّا ثمرة. لأنَّ معنى البكر هو الأوّل، فبكر الشيء هو من الشيء الذي هو بكره. وكما أنَّ من المحال أن يقول قائل: "إنَّ بكر ولد آدم ملاك من الملائكة، أو يكون<sup>3</sup> باكورة الثمار من حجر أو من حديد، فلذلك إنَّ من المحال أن يكون بكر المصنوعات إلّا مصنوعاً، وبكر المخلوقات ليس بمخلوق. فهذا تناقض بين لا يخفى على من طلب الحق وراقب الربّ.

الوجه السادس: أنَّ يسوع المسيح إنَّه خالق أزليّ، وُلد من أبيه قبل العوالم وليس بمصنوع. وليس يخلو أنَّ الآب أولد شيئاً موجوداً أو غير موجود. فإنَّ كان الإبن لم يزل<sup>4</sup> موجوداً فإنَّ الآب لم يلد شيئاً، وذكر الولد والتولّد فصل ويقول بكلّ كذب وزور، وفي ذلك بطلان شريعة الإيمان. وإنَّ كان الآب أولد شيئاً حادثاً

28r

أو: الإنسان<sup>2B</sup>. these words are added in the margin in A. ... يسوع المسيح<sup>1</sup>

يزال<sup>4B</sup>: يكون

The fourth point is that they say in it that Jesus Christ is true God from true God, of the substance of his Father, although Jesus Christ attested that he was flesh, blood and bones. So if he was true God from the substance of his Father, then God almighty must have been flesh, blood and bone—may God be highly and greatly exalted above this; and in it is self-contradiction and cancelling of the Creed. For if someone were to point to darkness and say, 'It is from the substance of the sun', we would call him a liar; and if he were to point to a blazing fire and say, 'It is from the substance of ice', we would call him a liar. In the same way, we call a liar anyone who says, 'A body that is implanted and can be weighed is of the kind that is not implanted, cannot be weighed and is not finite', we would think what he said was despicable, and we would | feel free to disown his opinion and to censure anyone who held its like. 27v

The fifth point is that they say in the Creed that Jesus Christ was the first-born of creatures and was not made, as though they said he was created and not created, because the first-born of creatures can only be from creatures just as the first-born of a human can only be from a human, or the first yield of fruit can only be fruit. For the meaning of 'first-born' is the first, so the first-born of something will be from the thing of which it is the first-born. Just as it is impossible for anyone to say, 'The first-born of a human is one of the angels', or 'The first yield of fruit is of stone or iron', so it is impossible for the first-born of things that are made to be anything but made, and the first-born of things that are created not to be created. This is clear self-contradiction that cannot be hidden from anyone who seeks the truth and fears the Lord.

The sixth point is, 'Jesus Christ is eternal Creator, begotten from his Father before the worlds and not made'. The Father, then, must have begotten something that was in existence or | was not in existence. If the Son existed eternally, the Father could not have begotten anything, and talk of the Son and of begetting must cease, for it speaks of every lie and falsehood. In this the Creed is disproved. And if the Father begot something that came into 28r

لم يكن إلا بن إلامحدثاً كما ذكرنا. وفي ذلك أيضاً نسخ لشريعة الإيمان وبطلانها، فإنها تقول إن المسيح مولود وإنه أزلي خالق.

الوجه السابع: أن الأمانة تقول إن المسيح إله حق من جوهر أبيه، ثم ذكرت أنه نزل وتجسّم [من] <sup>1</sup>الروح القدس. ومعنى القول: "أن يسوع المسيح نزل وتجسّم [من] الروح القدس" <sup>2</sup>هو <sup>3</sup>أن يسوع المسيح الذي كان جسماً محدوداً نزل فتجسّم، وإنما يتجسّم <sup>4</sup>من لم يكن جسماً. فأما من أقرب أنه جسم، فما معنى تجسّمه؟

رأيت معنى المسيحية قد أذهل قلوباً كثيرة وحير أقواماً، ومن تدبر | هذا الإسم <sup>28v</sup> على أن فيه دليلاً على أن المسيح هو الممسوح، وماسحه الله الأزلي القدوس الذي لا يماسه شيء ولا يماسه شيء ولا يشاكله شيء كما قال لوقا في كتاب قصص الحوارين في الفصل الرابع عشر منه: "إن الله <sup>5</sup> خالق العالم بجميع ما فيه، وهو رب السموات والأرض، لا يسكن الهياكل التي بنتها الأيدي، ولا تناله أيدي الرجال، ولا يحتاج إلى شيء من الأشياء، لأنه هو أعطى الناس الحياة والنفس، فوجودنا به وحياتنا منه". فقد بان ممّا<sup>6</sup> قاله لوقا وقالت الأنبياء إن كل ساكن في مكان، أو مسكون فيه، أو ماسح أو ممسوح، فهو جسم من الأجسام محدود محاط به، والله—تعالى ذكره—لا يُحدّد. فعنى المسيح ما بينا وهو الممسوح، ومثل ذلك في [ال]لغة السريانية والعبرانية كثير، لأن معنى أكثر الفعل عندهم هو مفعول | <sup>29r</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This word is supplied on the basis of the marginal note in A. <sup>2</sup>ومعنى القول ... الروح القدس

this phrase is repeated in B. <sup>3</sup>A and B: وهو. <sup>4</sup>B: تجسّم. <sup>5</sup>B adds: تعالى. <sup>6</sup>B: بما.



being, the Son can only have been temporal, as we have said. And in this too is the negating of the Creed and disproof of it, because it says that Christ was begotten and was eternal Creator.

The seventh point is that the Creed says that Christ was true God, of the substance of his Father, and then it mentions that he came down and became flesh<sup>126</sup> of the Holy Spirit. The meaning of the words, 'Jesus Christ came down and became flesh of the Holy Spirit' is that Jesus Christ, who was finite flesh, came down and became flesh. But only a being who is not flesh can become flesh, so for whoever affirms that he was flesh, what is the meaning of his becoming flesh?<sup>127</sup>

I have noticed that the meaning of 'Christianity' has baffled many minds and bewildered people. Whoever considers | that this name contains proof that Christ was the anointed one, and that his Anointer was the eternal, holy God, whom nothing can touch, with whom nothing can have contact,<sup>128</sup> and nothing resembles; as Luke says in the Stories of the Apostles, in Chapter 14 of it, 'God almighty is the Creator of the world and everything that is in it, and he is the Lord of the heavens and the earth; he does not dwell in any temple which hands have built; the hands of men cannot grasp him; and he has no need of anything at all, because it is he who gave humans life and soul, so that our existence is through him and our life is through him.'<sup>129</sup> It is clear from Luke and what the prophets have said that everyone who dwells in a place or is contained within it, or who anoints or is anointed, is a body that is limited and surrounded, but God, almighty is the mention of him, is not limited. And the meaning of 'Christ', as we have shown,<sup>130</sup> is 'one who is anointed'. There are many similar instances in Syriac and Hebrew, because according to them, the meaning of most verbal forms is passive, | such as their expression 'one in prison', which is 'imprisoned',

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126 The verb employed here is *tajassama*, whereas in the Creed above it is *tajassada*. Assuming there is no copyist's error here or there, this form suggests more the involvement of physical being in the Incarnation while the earlier suggests more the involvement of bodily humanity.

127 'Alī's point here arises from the reference in the Creed to the Son of God being Jesus Christ: '[We believe] in the one Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of God, first-born of all creatures, of the ages of his Father before all worlds, not made, true God from the substance of his Father'. For both Christians and Muslims, the person of Christ would be the human individual, and so the Creed might be said to refer confusingly to this individual becoming human.

128 The use of the third form, *māsaḥahu* (Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 2713: 'he took him by the hand'), gives a subtle variation on the meaning of the verb under discussion at this point.

129 Acts 17:24–25.

130 This must be at the beginning of this paragraph, because there is no earlier discussion of the meaning of this term.

كقولهم: "حبساً" وهو محبوس، و"قتيلاً" معناه مقتول، و"وليداً" معناه مولود، وكذلك "مسيحاً" ممسوح.

فلا يذهبنّ وهم السامع له إلى أنّه إسم سماويّ إلهيّ. وقالت اليهود تمسح ملوكها وانبياءها بدهن مبارك. وقد قال داود عليه السلام في ذلك ما يدفع الشغب والشكّ. واحتجّ بولس<sup>1</sup> عليه السلام بنبوته هذه في كتابه بأنه ينبئنا على المسيح، فقال في المزمور الخامس والأربعين: "يا مَنْ فاق الناس جمالاً، لقد أفرغت الرحمة على شفاهك".<sup>2</sup> وقال: "فن أجل ذلك مسحك الله إلهك بدهن السرور أكثر مما مسح به نظراءك". فأبان النبيّ بهذه الآية ما معنى المسيح، وإنّما مسحه الله إلاّ لأنّه مصطفى مكرماً، وأنّه له إله.

وقد دعني الغاية بهذا الأمر إلى أن تقصّيت الإنجيل<sup>3</sup> وكتب بولس<sup>4</sup> وغيره<sup>29v</sup> تقصّياً، وقلبت جميع ذلك قلباً فوجدت ذلك كلّهُ نحواً من عشرين ألف آية، كلّها تبوح وتنطق بإنسانية المسيح، وأنّه مربوب مبعوث، وبأنّ الله أقامه من بين الموتى واختصّه بالكرامات، ما خلا كليّات نحو العشرة مشكلات. وقد تأوّلها أهل كلّ مذهب من النصارى على أهوائهم، ووجدت أولئك الثلاثمائة والثمانية عشر كاهن، وأمّا الذين اجتمعوا كلّهم من كلّ فج عميق يعقدوا هذه الشريعة قد اطرحوا تلك الآيات الجمّة المنقاسة ناحية، وتمسّكوا بالمشكلات

يونس: 4A and B. وكتب الإنجيل: 3A and B add. شقاها: B; شفاها: 2A. يونس: 1A and B.

and the meaning of 'casualty' is 'one killed', the meaning of 'baby' is 'one born', and similarly 'Christ' is 'one anointed'.

Anyone hearing this would never think it is a heavenly, divine name. The Jews said that the anointing of their kings and prophets was with blessed oil, and David (peace be upon him) has said about it things that remove disagreement and doubt. Paul (peace be upon him)<sup>131</sup> makes use of this prophecy of his in his book, when he tells us about Christ and says in Psalm 45, 'O you who are above humans in beauty, compassion is poured out on your lips',<sup>132</sup> and 'Because of this, God your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness, and more than he has anointed any like you.'<sup>133</sup> With this verse the prophet makes clear the meaning of 'Christ': God has anointed him only because he is chosen and honoured, and has a God.

The purpose in this regard | drew me to make a full study of the Gospel and the books of Paul and others.<sup>134</sup> I turned them all inside out and I discovered that in all they were nearly twenty thousand verses, all of them declaring and stating the humanity of Christ, and that he was subordinate and sent, and that God raised him from among the dead<sup>135</sup> and distinguished him by miracles, except for no more than about ten problematic, brief utterances. The followers of every denomination of Christians have interpreted these according to their own notions.<sup>136</sup> I discovered that the three hundred and eighteen priests, those

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131 This formula must have been added by the copyist, who mistook the name for Jonah, one of the recognised prophets. As Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. 39, n. 137, points out, a Muslim would be unlikely to invoke blessings on someone who was generally thought to have intentionally corrupted the original teachings of Jesus.

132 Psalm 45:2.

133 Psalm 45:7. This latter verse is quoted in Hebrews 1:9.

134 The MS reading here, *al-Injil wa-kutub al-Injil wa-kutub Yūnus wa-ghayrahu*, is clearly a case of dittography.

135 While the resurrection demonstrates Christ's inferiority to God, and therefore suits 'Alī's argument, the event itself would, of course, not be accepted by Muslims. Strictly speaking, he has to concede its historicity because it appears in the scriptural texts which for the sake of his argument he is taking as authentic.

136 It would be of some interest to know whether 'Alī made this systematic investigation of the New Testament books he refers to here before his conversion or after. If after, he would have been intentionally searching for evidence to support the Muslim view of Christ, but if before he would evidently already have been harbouring doubts about Christian teachings about Christ's divinity.

القليلة التي أنا مفسرها آخر كتابي هذا، واتمسوا لها تأويلات مُخالفات لمعظم<sup>1</sup>  
 30r الأصول خارجة عن المعقول. واستعملوا فيها الأهواء المدخولة التي أظنها مالت  
 بهم إلى ملوك فلاسفة الروم وغيرهم من الدهرية والثنوية<sup>2</sup> لأنهم زعموا أن خالق  
 الدنيا هو جزء من أجزاء<sup>3</sup> الدنيا، وقد بينا أنفاً ما في ذلك من التعطيل. فقالوا مرة إن  
 يسوع المسيح أزلّ خالق، ثم زعموا أن الشيطان غلبه وقتله. فلو كانوا قصدوا الحق  
 وجدوه أبلج<sup>4</sup> وأضحاً، ولردّوا المشكلات الشاذة على الواضحات، لأنّ الكثيرة هي  
 الأصول والقليلة الشاذة هي الفروع، وإنّما يُردّ الفرع على أصله، ويُقاس الجزء على  
 كلّه، ولا يُقاس الكلّ على جزء، لأنّه إنّما يستدلّ على ما غاب بما حضر، وعلى ما  
 أشكل وقلّ بما كثر وظهر. ولئن كان ما قالت اليعقوبية من نزول القديم الأزلّي  
 30v واستحالته حملاً ودماً، أو كان ما قال غيرهم من نزوله وحلوله في بطن مريم امرأة،  
 وفي جسم المسيح أخرى، حتى يبلغ من قمع الشيطان واستنقاذ الناس من يده  
 المبلغ الذي يحبه<sup>5</sup>

وقد<sup>6</sup> زعمتم أنّه لما عجّزت الأنبياء عن ما أراد من ذلك وجه ابنه الفرد لإستشارة<sup>7</sup>  
 الحرب بنفسه وكسر الشوكة من عدوّه. وقد رجع ابنه على ما يزعمون ولم يصنع من  
 ذلك شيئاً، ولا أبطل خطيّة ولا موتاً، وإنّما كان نزل لذلك. وإذا أراد الله أمراً  
 فلا مردّ له ولا مرضاة لله إلّا في تمامه.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: لعظم. <sup>2</sup>B: والنبوية. <sup>3</sup>A: هو جزؤ من اجزاء الدنيا. these words are added in the margin in

A; B: حر من احرا(ر). <sup>4</sup>B: ابلج. <sup>5</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>6</sup>This word is added in

the margin in A. <sup>7</sup>B: لمستشارة.

who all came together from every direction to agree the Creed,<sup>137</sup> had rejected completely these numerous verses, and seized onto the few problematic ones, which I will explain at the end of this book of mine,<sup>138</sup> and had sought interpretations of them that were opposed to the majority of the principles and lay outside what is rational. They brought to bear upon them abnormal notions which I suspect | drew them closer to the leading Byzantine philosophers and others from the materialists and dualists, because they claimed that the Creator of the world was a part of the world.<sup>139</sup> But we have shown above what this entails for the denial of God's characteristics. For at one time they say that Jesus Christ is eternal Creator, and then they claim that Satan defeated him and killed him. If they had been seeking the truth, they would have found it clear and evident, and they would have referred the problematic, exceptional ones to the ones that are evident, because the great number are the bases and the few exceptional ones are the derivatives. The derivative should be referred to its base, and the part should be gauged against its whole, not the whole gauged against a part, for information about what is absent can only be obtained from what is present, and about what is dubious and few from what is numerous and obvious.<sup>140</sup> If what the Jacobites teach about the descent of the eternal, timeless One and his changing into flesh and blood, or what others say about his descent and dwelling in Mary's womb | at one time and in Christ's body at another, with an aim to subdue Satan and deliver humankind from his grip, this was the aim that he desired.

30r

30v

You have claimed that when the prophets were unable to perform this thing that he willed, he sent his only Son to wage open war in person and curb his enemy's bravery. According to what they claim, his Son returned without doing any of this, not destroying sin or death, even though he had descended for it. But when God wills a thing there is no resistance to it, and God's good pleasure is only in its being completed.

137 The Council of Nicea, at which the Creed that 'Alī has already attacked at length was drawn up, was traditionally regarded as being composed of 318 representatives of the churches. The figure is first mentioned by Athanasius in the fourth century.

138 This gives an indication of some of the contents of the lost latter parts of the *Radd*. One of Ibn al-'Assāl's quotations (see the list below, quoting from p. 110 of his work) may refer to this.

139 'Alī alludes with some accuracy to Christian theologians employing terms and concepts from Greek philosophy to express the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation.

140 This prescription for exegesis indicates that 'Alī would regard the recourse to Greek philosophy as misguided, and would instead prefer the principle that scripture is its own best interpreter.

ولعلّ الله قد نزل كذلك أيضاً منذ سنين، واستحال جنينا في رحم جارية بتول، وبقي مصوراً<sup>1</sup> في المشيمة شهوراً كثيرة، كما قلتم في المسيح. ولعلّ أمه لما رأت أنها قد حملت من غير جماع دعاها الحنة والأنفة والخوف إلى أن غابت عن بلدها، وهربت على وجهها وولدت ابنها ونشأ الصبي ورُبيّ، فهو بعض من ترونيه يتردد<sup>2</sup> 31r معكم في الأسواق، ويركبه الذباب<sup>3</sup> ويمتص من دمه البقعة، ويضربه الشيطان على رأسه كما ضرب اليهود على رأس المسيح فيما يزعمون. فهذا نقض<sup>4</sup> الحجّة على اليعقوبية.

فأما على غيرهم ممن يقول بالحلول فإنه إن صحّ من حلول الأزليّ الخالق في المسيح لقد يجوز في قلوبهم أن يكون الله الخالق الأزليّ حالاً في بعض غلمان دهرنا هذا. فهو يتردد معه كما كان يتردد مع يسوع المسيح، ولعله اليوم صانع أو أجير أو أسير<sup>5</sup>، لا يعرف نفسه ولا أن الله حال<sup>6</sup> فيه، كما لم يعلمه المسيح إلّا بعد ثلاثين سنة. فإن كان هذا بهتاناً وهدياناً من القول فيحذره حاذر، ولينظر العاقل لنفسه منكم ما دام باب التوبة مفتوحاً<sup>7</sup> وسبب النجاة موجوداً<sup>8</sup>.

وها أنا ذا كر أربعة أوجه لا محيد ولا محيص لكافة النصارى عنها، فيها يستدلّ 31v على صحة الشريعة من نقصها، ولا سبيل إلى الزيادة والنقصان فيها:

فأولها: البشارة التي أداها الملاك جبرائيل عليه السلام عن الله عزّ وجلّ إلى مريم الطاهرة، أصدق مخبر من أبرّ مخبر، وأولى بالإستماع منه والإقتصاد عليه. الوجه الثاني الذي يضارع هذا هو: النداء<sup>9</sup> المسموع من السماء في المسيح.

<sup>1</sup>B: مصدراً. <sup>2</sup>B: الذئاب. <sup>3</sup>B: نقص. <sup>4</sup>A and B: صانعاً أو أجيراً أو أسيراً. <sup>5</sup>A and B: حالاً. <sup>6</sup>A

والند: <sup>9</sup>A and B: فادّلهما. <sup>8</sup>B: موجود. <sup>7</sup>A and B: مفتوح. <sup>6</sup>A and B:

It is possible that God could also have descended in this way a few years ago and turned into an embryo in the womb of a young virgin, and continued as a shape in the placenta for many months,<sup>141</sup> as you say about Christ. And it is possible that when his mother saw that she had become pregnant without sexual intercourse, sensitivity, self-respect and fear drove her to flee from her country and escape alone.<sup>142</sup> She gave birth to her child, and the young boy developed and grew, and he is one of those you see going about | with you in the market places, flies pester him, insects suck his blood, and Satan strikes him on the head just as the Jews struck Christ on the head, as they claim. This weakens the argument for the Jacobites. 31r

As for the others who teach indwelling, if the indwelling of the eternal Creator in Christ is right, then in their minds it must be right for God the eternal Creator to indwell one of the youths of our time and to go about with him as he went about with Jesus Christ. And maybe this very day he is a craftsman or labourer or prisoner and does not know himself, nor that God dwells within him, just as Christ only knew after thirty years. If this is a lie and mad talk, then the wary person should be on guard and the reasonable person among you should look to himself while the gate of repentance remains open and the means of salvation are available.<sup>143</sup>

Now I shall discuss four points which there is no avoiding or escaping for any of the Christians. From them one can judge the | correctness of the Creed from its inadequacy, and there is no possibility of adding to it or subtracting from it: 31v

The first is the annunciation which the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) brought from God, great and mighty, to Mary the pure one, the most trustworthy of messengers from the most godly of messengers, the most worthy to be heard and heeded.<sup>144</sup>

The second point, which is similar to this, is the voice heard from heaven about Christ.<sup>145</sup>

141 This is one of a number of instances in the work where 'Alī displays his specialist medical interests.

142 Cf. Q 19:22.

143 One wonders whether 'Alī betrays here some of the thinking that led him to convert to Islam: if God is omnipotent, there is no reason to consider his Incarnation in Christ a unique act, leading to the absurdity of multiple repetitions, even in his own day. The only recourse is to abandon such whimsical conjecturing and the faith that gives rise to it.

144 Cf. Luke 1:26–38; Q 19:17–21; 3:42–51.

145 Matthew 3:16–17||Mark 1:10–11; Luke 3:21–22.

الوجه الثالث: من قوله في يحيى بن زكريّا عليه السلام الذي شاهد المسيح وقال فيه أنّه لم يقيم عن مثله [بين المولودين من] <sup>1</sup>النساء.

الوجه الرابع: قول المسيح في نفسه حين سأله يوحنا المعمدان وغيره عن شأنه. فهذه أربعة أوجه لا مدفع لها، فمن نبذها وراء ظهره أو حرفها أو زاد فيها أو نقص منها، فقد خالف الله صراحاً.

وإن كان هؤلاء قالوا فيه إنّه خالق أزليّ، والأزليّ الخالق رفيقه أو قرينه أو <sup>2</sup>ساكنه أو نزيله، لا فرقان بينهما في قول ولا فعل، أو كان المسيح قال ذلك <sup>32r</sup> في نفسه وشأنه أو جنباً العذر لمن اعتذر هذه الشريعة. وإن كانوا كلّهم قالوا بخلاف ما في الشريعة صحّ عندهم حينئذ أنّهم خونة كذبة، فإنهم قد أسخطوا الله تعالى، وخالفوا المسيح وداهوا الأمة، وذهبوا إمّا إلى الغيب وإمّا إلى تحقيق قول الدهريّة والثنويّة، كما بينّا أولاً.

فالذي قال جبريل الملاك لمريم عليها السلام على ما وُجد في إنجيل لوقا في الفصل الأوّل منه أنّ جبريل قال: "السلام عليكِ أيّها الممتلئة نعماً، ربنا معكِ أيّها المباركة في النساء". فلما رآته مريم ذعرت منه فقال لها: "لا ترهبي يا مريم قد <sup>4</sup>فزتِ بنعمة من ربّك. وها أنتِ تحبلين وتلدن إبناً وتسميه يسوعاً ويكون كبيراً، ويسمى ابن الله تعالى العليّ، ويعطيه الله الربّ كرسي أبيه داود، ويكون ملكاً على آل يعقوب إلى الأبد". <sup>32v</sup> ا قالت مريم: "أنّى يكون ذلك ولم يمسنني رجل؟"

<sup>1</sup>The words in brackets, which are missing in A and B, are supplied on the basis of the Gospel verse. <sup>2</sup>B: لا. <sup>3</sup>B: أوحينا (wrongly; a misreading of A). <sup>4</sup>A and B: فزتي.



The third point is what he said about John the son of Zechariah (peace be upon him), about whom Christ witnessed and said that none like him had arisen from those born of women.<sup>146</sup>

The fourth point is Christ's words about himself when John the Baptist and others asked him who he was.<sup>147</sup>

These are four points that cannot be rejected, and whoever dismisses them or tampers with them, or adds to them or subtracts from them has disobeyed God openly.

Since these people say that he was eternal God and that the eternal God was his companion, or linked to him, or dwelling within him, or had descended to him with no distinction between them in word or deed,<sup>148</sup> or that | Christ had said this about himself and his circumstances, an excuse for whoever wants to be excused from this Creed is required from us. Since they have all taught the contrary to what is in the Creed, they will acknowledge the truth of being faithless and deceitful because they have angered God almighty, placed themselves in opposition to Christ, cheated the community, and gone off either into the unknown or into confirming the teachings of the materialists and dualists, as we have shown from the outset.

32r

What the angel Gabriel said to Mary (peace be upon her) according to what is found in the Gospel of Luke, in Chapter 1 of it, is: 'Gabriel said, "Peace be upon you, you who are full of grace. Our Lord is with you, O blessed among women." When Mary saw him she was afraid of him, so he said to her, "Do not be alarmed at me Mary, you have earned grace from your Lord. And behold, you will conceive and bear a son, and you will call him Jesus. He will be great, and he will be called the Son of God, almighty and exalted. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will be king over the People of Jacob forever." | Mary said, "How can this be, when no man has touched me?"

32v

146 Matthew 11:11.

147 Matthew 11:2–6||Luke 7:18–23.

148 This list of metaphorical explanations of the Incarnation recalls the list given by Abū ʿĪsā al-Warrāq (see Thomas, *Trinity*, pp. 70–71, § 11).

قال لها جبريل: "إنَّ روح القدس يأتيك بقوة العليّ، الأعلى يحلّ فيك، من أجل ذلك يكون الولد الذي يولد منك قدسيّاً، ويُسمّى ابن الله العليّ".

فلم نر الملاك قال فيما في شريعتكم: "إنَّ الذي تلدين هو خالقك وخالق الدنيا كلّها، ولا إنَّ الأزليّ الخالق يصير ساكنك ولا قرينك ولا نزليك". لم يزد<sup>2</sup> على أنّه قال: "مولوداً"، "مكرّماً"، "كبيراً"، "وأنَّ الله يُعطيه"، "وأنَّ داود النبيّ أبوه"، "وأنّه يُسمّى ابن الله". وقد علمتم — يهديكم الله — أنَّ سُمّي ابن الله كثير<sup>3</sup> فلا يحصون.<sup>4</sup> وسأبين ذلك فيما بعد لثلا يتعلق متعلق به، فنّ لم يقتصر على ما قال الله عزّ وجلّ في المسيح على لسان جبريل، وزاد<sup>5</sup> عليه أو نقص، كان من المعتدين الغاوين.

فأمّا معنى قول جبريل لمريم: "إنَّ الله معك"، فقد قال الله لموسى وغيره من الأنبياء: "إنّني معكم"، وقال ليوشع ابن انون: "إنّني أكون معك كما كنتُ مع موسى عبدي".<sup>33r</sup> وتقول النصرانيّ كلّهم: "إنَّ الله تعالى روح القدس مع كلّ خطيب يوافقهم في خطبته".

وأما النداء<sup>7</sup> الذي سمعه يحيى من السماء، وشاهده يحيى بن زكريا، فإنّه أيضاً إنَّ نبتّموه أو زدتم فيه أو نقصتم<sup>8</sup> منه، خالفتم الله تعالى ومناديه، ولزمكم الحجّة البالغة فيه. وقد قال متى في إنجيله في الفصل الثاني: "إنَّ المسيح أتى يحيى بن زكريا فيمن أتاها، فلما رآه يوحنا المعمدان قال له: إنّي لاحتاج أن أنصبغ وأعمد<sup>9</sup> على يديك، وها

<sup>1</sup>A and B: ترى. <sup>2</sup>B: يرد (wrongly; a misreading of A). <sup>3</sup>A and B: كبيراً; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 88. <sup>4</sup>A and B: يحصون; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 88. <sup>5</sup>B: زاد. <sup>6</sup>B: أمّا. <sup>7</sup>وَمَا الندى; these two words are added in the margin in A; B: النداء. <sup>8</sup>A and B: نقصتم. <sup>9</sup>A and B: أنضع وأعمل; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 85.

Gabriel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come to you with the power of the high One. The most High will alight upon you,<sup>149</sup> and because of this the child who is born from you will be holy, and will be called the Son of God the high One."<sup>150</sup>

We do not see the angel saying, as is in your Creed, 'The one you will bear is your Creator and the Creator of the whole world', nor 'The eternal Creator will come to dwell within you', nor 'be your companion', nor 'be your guest'. He said no more than 'born', 'honoured', 'great', that 'God will give to him', that 'the prophet David is his father', and that 'he will be called Son of God'. But you know, may God guide you, that many have been called son of God and they are innumerable. I will explain this later,<sup>151</sup> so that no one will be able to cling to it. Anyone who is not content with what God, great and mighty, says about Christ on the tongue of Gabriel and has added to it or subtracted from it is a seductive aggressor.

About the meaning of Gabriel's words to Mary, 'God is with you', God said to Moses and other prophets, 'I am with you'.<sup>152</sup> And he said to Joshua son of Nun, 'I will be with you as I was with Moses my servant'.<sup>153</sup> And all the Christians say that God almighty the Holy Spirit is with every preacher, confirming them in their sermon.

33r

About the voice which John heard from heaven, and to which John son of Zechariah witnessed,<sup>154</sup> this too, if you reject it or add to it or subtract from it, you oppose God almighty and those who proclaim for him, and you will have to produce a substantial argument for this. Matthew in his Gospel in Chapter 2 says, 'Christ came to John son of Zechariah among those who were coming to him. Then, when John the Baptist saw him, he said to him, "I should humble myself and to be baptized by you, but here you have come to me for this."

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149 'Alī's translation here incorporates the verb *halla* which was commonly used by Arabic-speaking Christians, mainly Nestorians, to explain the indwelling of the divine nature in the human in Christ.

150 Luke 1:28–35.

151 'Alī says at the beginning of the *Radd* that part of his discussion will be about the names 'father' and 'son'. This is among the lost parts of the work.

152 Exodus 3:12.

153 Joshua 3:7.

154 This is a conflation of the Synoptic accounts and John 3:27–30.

أنت قد جئتني<sup>1</sup> إلى ذلك. قال له يسوع: ورغبتك هذه<sup>2</sup> فقد يجب علينا أن نتمم البرّ كلّهُ، ثمّ اغتمس في الأردن وانصبغ<sup>3</sup> على يده، وذاك منه اعتراف<sup>4</sup> بأنّ مصيره إلى يحيى والإنصباع<sup>5</sup> على يديه من البرّ والزلفى. وليست مرتبة المقصود إليه لإزدياد البرّ منه بدون مرتبة القاصد الراغب فيه.

33v قال متى في إنجيله: "فلما خرج المسيح من الأردن فتفتّحت له السماء، ونظر يحيى إلى روح القدس قد نزل من السماء على المسيح على هيئة حمامة، وسمع النداء من السماء: إنّ هذا إبنى الحبيب الذي اصطفيته". ولم يرَ منادياً من السماء زاد على ما قاله جبريل لمريم عليهما السلام شيئاً، بل أخبر أنّ الله اصطفاه وسماه إبناً فقط. وقد علمنا أنّ المصطفى فاعل متفضّل<sup>6</sup> والمصطفى مفعول به منعم<sup>7</sup> عليه. ولم يستنكف المسيح إذ أقرّ واعترف بذلك مراراً لا تُحصى كما بينا وقدّمنا.

وأما قوله: "هذا إبنى" فأعلم الناس بتفسير هذا المعنى، المسيح نفسه. قد فسّر دقيقه<sup>8</sup>؛ لم يدع لمضلّ خادع فيه مقالاً، وأنّ المسيح قال: "ها أنا<sup>9</sup> ذاهب إلى أبي وأبيكم وإلهي وإلهكم". ولم يفضّل نفسه هاهنا على أحد، ولم يأنف ممّا أنفتم له من العبودية، لأنّ من كان له إله فهو عبد مربوب.<sup>10</sup>

34r

وقال لوقا في الفصل الثالث من إنجيله إنّ يحيى المعمدانى أرسل إلى المسيح بعد أن عمّده برسالة تقول له: "أنت الذي يحيى أو تتوقع غيرك؟". فكان جواب يسوع المسيح لرسله أن: "ارجعوا إليه وأخبروه بما ترون من عميان يبصرون وزمنى

<sup>1</sup>A and B: أجبتني; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 85. <sup>2</sup>A and B: هذا. <sup>3</sup>A and B: اتّضع; cf. Naṣr ibn

Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 85. <sup>4</sup>A and B: اعترافاً. <sup>5</sup>A and B: والاتضاع; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 84.

<sup>6</sup>B: منفصل. <sup>7</sup>A and B: منعماً. <sup>8</sup>B: رفيقه. <sup>9</sup>B: هاء ناذا. <sup>10</sup>B: مربوب.

Jesus said to him, "I would rather you did it, because we should fulfil all piety." Then he was immersed in the Jordan and was baptized by him.<sup>155</sup> This was an acknowledgement on his part that his coming to John and baptism by him was out of piety and the desire to please. And the rank of the one who is approached for the increasing of piety from him is not lower than the rank of the one who approaches desiring this.<sup>156</sup>

Matthew says in his Gospel, 'When Christ came out of the Jordan, heaven was opened to him, and John saw that the Holy Spirit had descended from heaven onto Christ in the form of a dove. And he heard the voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son whom I have chosen."<sup>157</sup> He did not see a proclaimer from heaven adding anything at all to what Gabriel said to Mary (peace be upon them), but it announced that God had chosen him and called him Son, and no more. We know that the one who chooses is an independent agent, and the one who is chosen (grammatically the object) is the one who is given a favour. Christ did not refuse to affirm this or acknowledge it times without number, as we have shown and set out above.

33v

About his words, 'This is my Son', it was Christ himself who would have been the most knowledgeable of people about the explanation of the meaning of this. He explained the detail of it, and did not leave any opinion about it for any delusive deceiver. Christ said, 'Now I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God,'<sup>158</sup> and here he made no distinction between himself and anyone, and he did not reject being a servant in the way that you do for him, | because anyone who has a God is a servant and is subordinate.

34r

In Chapter 3 of his Gospel Luke says, 'John the Baptist sent a message to Christ after he had baptized him, saying to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we wait for another?"' Jesus Christ's reply to his messengers was, "Go back to him and tell him what you have seen, the blind see, the sick

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<sup>155</sup> Matthew 3:13–17.

<sup>156</sup> Thus John the Baptist was Jesus' equal.

<sup>157</sup> Matthew 3:16–17, though both Matthew and Mark (1:10–11) suggest that only Jesus saw the Spirit descending. Luke alone (3:21–22) makes clear that the theophany was public.

<sup>158</sup> John 20:17.

ينهضون<sup>1</sup> وصم يسمعون، فطوبى لمن لم يعتدى ويزلّ في أمري<sup>2</sup>. فلم نره أجاب يحيى المعمداني بمثل ما قلتم ولا قال له: "إني خالقك وخالق كل شيء" كما في شريعة إيمانكم، ولا أن الخالق الأزلي نازل بي ولا حال<sup>3</sup> في، ولا متحد معي، بل حذر الغلط والإغترار في أمره.

فأمّا الآيات التي ذكرها، فقد فعل سائر الأنبياء مثلها وأكثر، وسنبيّن ذلك في بابهِ إن شاء الله تعالى.

ولم نريحي بن زكريا—وهو زاد فيما ذكرنا بالإنجيل—على أن قال مثلياً على المسيح: 34v "إنّه أقوى مني وإني لا أستحلّ أن أحلّ مقعد خفيّه"<sup>4</sup>، ولم يقل: "إنّه خالقي" ولا "يحلّ خالقي"<sup>5</sup>. وقد نقل الرجل الخبير<sup>6</sup> الفاضل مثل ما قال فيه فيما دونه تواضعاً وخشوعاً وتوقياً من العجب. وقد أتى صاحبه ليزداد به برّاً، وليس المرثي<sup>7</sup> بدون الراشي<sup>8</sup> لذلك في حكم العقول<sup>9</sup>.

فمن خالف هذه الأربعة أوجه وزاد فيها، فقد ابتدع وضلّ ولم يهتد<sup>10</sup>. وإذا عرضتم الشريعة على هذه الوجوه استبان لكم أنّها مخالفة لها من أولها إلى آخرها. وطال تعجّب العاقل العادل منها. ولقد فكّرت كثيراً فما أدري من أين وعن من قالوا ما قالوا.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: ينهضون; cf. al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, in Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-jawāb al-ṣaḥiḥ li-man baddala dīn al-Masīḥ*, Cairo, 1905, vol. 3, p. 323. <sup>2</sup>في أمري: these two words are added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>B: بال. <sup>4</sup>A and B: مقعداً خفيّه; cf. Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Naṣiḥa*, p. 84. <sup>5</sup>ولا يحلّ. <sup>6</sup>الخبير: these words are added in the margin in A. <sup>7</sup>B: المرء شيء. <sup>8</sup>B: الراش. <sup>9</sup>B: المعقول. <sup>10</sup>A and B: يهتدي.

are healed, the deaf hear, and blessed is the one who is not unjust and keeps my command.”<sup>159</sup> We do not see him answering John the Baptist with anything such as you say. Nor did he say to him, ‘I am your Creator and the Creator of everything’, as is in your Creed, nor ‘The eternal Creator descends to me’, nor ‘He dwells in me’, nor ‘He has united with me’.<sup>160</sup> But he cautioned about being mistaken and being wrong about himself.

Concerning the miracles he mentioned, all the prophets did things similar and more. We shall explain this in its place, as God almighty wishes.<sup>161</sup>

We do not see John son of Zechariah—and he went further in what we have mentioned of the Gospel in praising | Christ: ‘He is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to untie the lace of his shoe’<sup>162</sup>—he did not say, ‘He is my Creator’, or ‘My Creator came to dwell’. Something like what he said about him is what any fine, superior man would state about someone below him out of modesty, humility, and guarding against pride. For his counterpart had come to him for him to increase him in devoutness, and the one who receives a bribe is not inferior to the one who gives it, according to rational judgement.

34v

Whoever disagrees with these four points and exceeds them has introduced new things, is in error and is not guided. And if you refer to the Creed on these points, it will become clear to you that they disagree with it from beginning to end. Reasonable and honourable people will not cease to be amazed at it. I myself have often wondered from where and from whom they say what they do.

<sup>159</sup> Luke 7:19–23.

<sup>160</sup> These would all be familiar Christian metaphorical explanations of the Incarnation; cf. the list given by Abū ʿĪsa al-Warrāq, in Thomas, *Trinity*, pp. 70–71, § 11.

<sup>161</sup> The comparison between the miracles of Jesus and Old Testament prophets which follows below, as ʿAlī promises, is one of the earliest and most elaborate examples of this popular Muslim polemical feature.

<sup>162</sup> Luke 3:16; cf. Mark 1:7.

ولقد قال متى في إنجيله إن يوسف<sup>1</sup> ترآى<sup>2</sup> له ملاك فأمره بإتيان مريم، ثم أمره بعد ذلك أن يتوجه مع أهله والصبي إلى مصر ففعل ذلك. وفي هذا الباب عجائب لمن تأملها وفهمها. فمنها أن إياحي رأى روح القدس نزل على المسيح كهيئة حمامة، 35r  
نخالف قول الملاك ليوسف حين أنكر حبليها فإنه قال له: "أضمم إليك أهلك ولا يُربك ماترى، فإن الذي يتوالد منها هو من روح القدس". وإن كان المسيح نفسه هو كما قال الملاك، فما معنى نزول روح القدس مرة أخرى ثانية؟

ومنها إن كان الله أرسل إلى يوسف النجار ملاكاً، فأُنزل عليه وحياً، فهو نبيّ من الأنبياء. فهلاً سميتموه نبياً في الإنجيل وقد نبأنا<sup>3</sup> عن الملاك وأمره الله سبحانه بالمصير إلى مصر ففعل؟

وتحت هذا المثل: أولئك المجوس الذين ساروا من أرض المشرق في طلب المسيح حتى علموا بمولده وحاله، فإن الإنجيل يذكر أنهم ساروا إلى الشام حتى وقفوا على المسيح مقموطاً في الخرق، موضوعاً في المelf، وأن كوكباً كان يسير بين أيديهم من السماء. فقد استحقوا اسم النبوة أيضاً لأنهم لا يخلون من أن 35v  
يكونوا سبقوا إلى علم ذلك بالوحي. فهذا هو النبوة التامة أو أن يكون الشيطان أعلمهم ذلك فهو<sup>4</sup> إذا يعلم الغيب ويدلّ عليه إجراؤه الكواكب السماوية، أو يكون أدركوه بالنجوم فهي إذا تقوم مقام الوحي والنبوة. فإن لم يصح في هذه الوجوه وجه واحد<sup>5</sup>، فالخبر إذاً باطل<sup>6</sup>. وإن صح في المجوس أنبياء والشيطان متنبئ على الخير حاثاً عليه<sup>7</sup> وأحكام النجوم تقوم مقام النبوة. ولو ظهرت هذه الآية للقوم الذين وُلد بين أظهرهم وبُعث فيهم وإليهم، كان أولى

التامة أو أن يكون الشيطان أعلمهم ذلك فهو<sup>4</sup> بينا: 3B. ترآى: 2A and B. يونس: 1A and B.

باطلا: 6A and B. وجهاً واحداً: 5A and B. these words are added in the margin in A.

على الخير ... عليه: 7B.



Matthew has said in his Gospel that an angel appeared to Joseph and ordered him to take Mary, and then after this he ordered him to make his way with his wife and the child to Egypt, and he did this.<sup>163</sup> On this matter there are curious things for those who will consider them and understand them, among them that | John saw the Holy Spirit descend on Christ in the form of a dove, which contradicts the words of the angel to Joseph when he did not acknowledge that she was pregnant, for he said to him, 'Take your wife to yourself and do not be alarmed by what you see, because the child to be born from her is of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>164</sup> If Christ himself was as the angel said, what is the meaning of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him a second time?<sup>165</sup> 35r

Among them is that if God sent an angel to Joseph the carpenter, he sent down revelation on him, and he would have been one of the prophets. So why do you not call him a prophet in the Gospel when he told us about the angel, and God, may he be praised, ordered him to go to Egypt and he did so?

The same applies to those Magi who travelled from the land of the East in search of Christ until they might know about his birth and condition, the Gospel states that they travelled to Syria until they came to Christ wrapped in strips of cloth and placed in the manger, and that a star from heaven had gone before them.<sup>166</sup> They too deserve the title | of being prophet because they can only have gained the knowledge of this through revelation. This is the full extent of prophethood, unless Satan had informed them about it, if indeed he knows the unseen and his ability to move the stars of the heaven is proof of it, or unless they had learned about it through astrology, which would then be equivalent to revelation and prophecy. If none of these points is correct, then the report must be mistaken. And if it is correct, then there were prophets among the Magi, Satan can give prophecies about good and urge to it, and the opinions of astrology are equivalent to prophecy. And if this miracle had appeared to people in the midst of whom he had been born and among whom and to whom he had been sent, they would have had a prior and greater incentive to respond to his call than if it had appeared to people of the East. But we do not find 35v

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163 Matthew 2:13–15.

164 Matthew 1:20.

165 'Ali suggests that the descent of the Spirit at Jesus' baptism was not so much to affirm who he was but to inaugurate a new status. His argument is that if Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit he would not have to be adopted a second time by the Spirit.

166 Matthew 2:1–6.

وأدعى لهم إلى قبول دعوته من أن يكون يظهر لأهل المشرق. على أنا لا نجد في شيء من كتب الأعاجم وأخبارهم شيئاً من ذلك ولا ذكر هذه الكواكب.

36r وأيضاً فإنه إن كان يحيى المعمدان أن يرى روح القدس قد نزل على المسيح وسمع النداء من السماء واستقرّ عنده أن الذي كان قائلاً بين يديه إله الأزل<sup>1</sup> الخالق أو إنسان متحد مع الخالق الأزل<sup>2</sup> ثم لم يختر<sup>3</sup> على وجهه بين يدي خالقه وإلهه، ولم يقبل قدمه، ولم يتبعه من فوره فيصير من تلامذته، فقد استخفّ بخالقه الأزل<sup>4</sup> أو بمن كان الأزل<sup>5</sup> الخالق حالاً فيه، وضعّ علماً شامخاً<sup>6</sup> وفوزاً عظيماً. وما نصح<sup>3</sup> أيضاً أمته وبني عمه من تركه إذاعة<sup>4</sup> ما سمع ورأى ليعمله<sup>5</sup> القوم أن خالقهم معهم في صورة أحدهم، وإلههم فيهم وبينهم فلا يعصون له أمراً، ولا يزالون له عبداً خاشعين إلى أبد الآبدين.

36v ولم يحك<sup>6</sup> الإنجيل أن يحيى فعل شيئاً من ذلك، فليس لأنّه لم يفعل ما قلناه بالمسيح فقط، بل أنكر معرفته وأرسل إليه مستخبراً عن شأنه، وكان من قوله: "أنت الذي يحيى أو تتوقع غيرك؟" فليس كان يحيى أرسل إليه بعد أن رأى ما رأى وسمع ما سمع. فقد شكّ فيما رأى وشأن خبره الأول، وشكّ الناس فيه ونفّرهم. والمثل في ذلك كرجل مدح رجلاً ورفع دوين السماء، وآخر شرفه وكرّمه وقديم أيامه، ثم لم يلبث إذ بعث إليه مسكه، هل هو ذلك الذي وصفه وامتدحه، أو أن ذلك غيره؟ فما<sup>7</sup> يفعل مثل هذه الأشياء إلا مفتعل مرتاب.

<sup>1</sup>B: يحشو. <sup>2</sup>B: ساحماً. <sup>3</sup>B: يصبح. cf. C, p. 68. <sup>4</sup>B: إذا غرّ. cf. C, p. 68. <sup>5</sup>B: ليعمله. <sup>6</sup>A and B:

فيما. <sup>7</sup>B: يحيى.

anywhere in the books of the Persians or their histories anything about this, nor any mention of these stars.<sup>167</sup>

Furthermore, if John the Baptist had seen the Holy Spirit descending upon Christ and had heard the voice from heaven, and he had finally decided from this that the one speaking before him | was the Son of God, the eternal Creator, or a human united with the eternal Creator, and then had not fallen down on his face before his Creator and his God, and had not kissed his foot, and had not followed him at once and become one of his disciples, he would have been attaching little worth to his eternal Creator or to the one in whom the eternal Creator dwelled. He would be discarding lofty knowledge and a sublime attainment, and he would not be advising his community and cousins about his abandoning the spreading of what he had heard and seen, to inform the people that their Creator was with them in the form of one of them, and their God was among them and in the midst of them, so that they should not disobey any of his orders nor neglect his worship, submissive forever and ever.

36r

The Gospel does not relate that John did any of this. Not only did he not do what we have said about Christ, but he denied knowledge of him and sent to him to enquire about him, with the words, 'Are you the one who is to come or should we wait for another?'<sup>168</sup> John would not have sent to him after | seeing what he had seen and hearing what he had heard. So he had doubts about what he saw and the significance of the first news about him. And the people were doubtful about him, and he sent them away. This is just like a man praising someone and extolling him almost up to heaven, and later he exalts him and honours him and the great length of his life, and then he does not hesitate to send to him and get hold of him: is he the one he described and praised, or is this someone else? Only someone who is misled and in doubt would do such things as these.

36v

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167 'Alī expresses severe misgivings about the soundness of this Gospel account, because it goes against all that is logically consistent and reasonable, not least because as a Persian himself by origin he would expect there to be some mention of this stupendous event in one or other record he might know. The implication of his argument here and in the point about Joseph above is that the Gospel accounts are undependable, though he does not say this explicitly.

168 Matthew 11:3||Luke 7:19.

ومثل الذين<sup>1</sup> عقدوا هذه الشريعة لكم ومثل المسيح كمثل من آمن بنبوّة رجل ينتفي من النبوة، لأنّ المسيح يقول إنّه مريوب مبعوث، ويقول جبريل الملاك إنّهُ مكرّم مصطفى، وينادي المنادي من السماء بمثل<sup>2</sup> ذلك. وينطق يحيى بن زكريا ويقول ملك الطائفة المعطلة الدين المتهاونة هو خالق أزليّ، لكنّه ستر نفسه. ويقول المسيح وغيره ممّن سمعنا إنّهُ مُعطى وإنّ الله مُعطيه، وقال أولئك: "إنّهُ رازق<sup>37r</sup> النعم وواهبا". وقال المسيح وغيره من حواريه إنّ الله أقامه من بين الموتى، وقال أولئك: "بل هو يُقيم أهل الدنيا كلّهم بعد أن يموتوا". وقال المسيح إنّ الله أرسله، وقالوا: "نعم في الشريعة، بل هو الذي نزل لخلاصنا"، وأضربوا عن ذكر الإرسال.

وقد فسّر مفسّق<sup>3</sup> من النسطورية، وهو المفسّر، فقال إنّ يحيى المعمداني إنّما أرسل إلى المسيح مع تلامذته يسأله عن شأنه، ولأنّ تلامذته شكّوا فيه، فأحبّ يحيى أن يسمع كلامه ليزول عنهم الشكّ فيه. وهذه أغلوطة عظيمة من المفسّقان وتمويه، لأنّ أولئك التلامذة الذين كانوا مع يحيى المعمداني إنّ كانوا شكّوا في المسيح<sup>4</sup>، فما كانوا شكّوا في يحيى نفسه. ولو أنبأهم هو بما كان رأى من نزول الروح عليه ونداء السماء الذي سمعه لما كذّبوه بل قبلوه، ولكانت شهادة يحيى أنور وأكثر<sup>37v</sup> من شهادة المسيح.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: الذي. <sup>2</sup>A and B: ممثل. <sup>3</sup>A and B: مفسّقاً. <sup>4</sup> : these words are : كانوا شكّوا في المسيح repeated in A and crossed out.

Those who imposed this Creed upon you and Christ are just like someone who believes in the prophethood of a man who denies prophethood, because Christ said that he was subordinate and sent, the angel Gabriel said that he was honoured and chosen, the voice of the herald from heaven declared the like, John son of Zechariah said [...], and it was the king of a people without religion and neglectful<sup>169</sup> who said that he was eternal Creator, though he had concealed who he was. Christ and others we have heard said that he was given to and that God was the one who gave to him, but these people<sup>170</sup> say, | 'He is the provider and bestower of grace'. Christ and others among his disciples said God raised him from the dead, but these people say, 'But he will raise all the people of the earth after they have died'. Christ said that God sent him, and they say, 'Yes, according to the Creed, but he is the one who came down for our salvation', ignoring the reference to sending. 37r

A Nestorian exegete, the Interpreter,<sup>171</sup> gave an interpretation and said that John the Baptist sent to Jesus through his disciples to ask him about himself only because his disciples were in doubt about him, and John wanted to hear what he said in order to remove doubt about him from them. This is an enormous presumption and distortion on this exegete's<sup>172</sup> part, because if these disciples who were with John the Baptist may have been in doubt about Christ, they would not have doubted about John himself. So if he had told them about who it was on whom he had seen the Spirit descend, and the voice from heaven which he had heard, they would not have disbelieved him but would have accepted him, | and John's witness would have been more illuminating and significant than Christ's witness.<sup>173</sup> 37v

169 This would be Constantine, under whom the Nicene Creed was formulated.

170 Christians who accept the Nicene Creed.

171 This must be a reference to Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), whose commentaries and other works were regarded as providing definitive formulations of the faith by the Nestorians, 'Ali's former denomination. As 'Ali says, among them he was generally known as 'the Interpreter', and the epithet used here, *mufassiq*, is evidently a transliteration of the Syriac *mephashiq*. However, when it is considered that an Arabic-speaking Muslim reader might give it a meaning derived from *fassaqa*, 'to impute sinfulness or disobedience', there is just a possibility of some malicious wordplay.

172 The form here, *al-mufasqān*, is evidently a transliteration of the Syriac *mephashqān*.

173 This is because it would have been the witness of another, not of Christ about himself, and according to the Islamic tradition this would have been an individual who had the status of a prophet.

فقد قال يوحنا التلميذ في إنجيله ما يحقق قولي ويُبطل قول المفسقان، وهو أنّ المسيح قال: "لو كنت أنا الذي أشهد لنفسي لما كانت شهادتي حقاً، لكنّ غيري يشهد لي". فقد أبان بذلك أنّ ما<sup>1</sup> فسّر المفسقان غلط ومحال وبُهتان<sup>2</sup>. أيضاً أن يكون يحجي سمع المنادي وحده وعنده الزمرة<sup>3</sup> يعمدون، أو أن يستمع أمثالهم مثل ذلك ثمّ لا يذيعون ذلك، وإنّ كان يحجي النبي وتلامذته قد شكّوا في المسيح، فلا لوم على غيرهم من الشاكّين فيه.

المسألة عن تسميتهم المسيح إلهاً: أن يُقال لهم لقد<sup>4</sup> أقدمتم على أمر فري<sup>5</sup> في تسميتكم<sup>6</sup> إنساناً من الناس الخالق الأزليّ، ولن يعدو ذلك أحد خصال: إمّا أن تكونوا جعلتموه إلهاً أزليّاً أو مسكناً للأزليّ الخالق، إنّ كان المسيح قال ذلك 38r في نفسه، أو لأنّ تلامذته الذين نقلوا إليكم دينه قالوا ذلك فيه، أو لأنّه أظهر من الآيات والبيّنات ما استحقّ به أن تجعلوه<sup>7</sup> إلهاً، أو لأنّه صعد إلى السماء، أو لعجيب مولده وشأنه.

فإنّ قلتم جعلتموه إلهاً لعجيب مولده وشأنه، فليس مولده وكونه بأعجب من كون آدم بلا<sup>8</sup> أمّ له ولا أب. وليس أيضاً مولد المسيح بأعجب من مولد الملائكة والروحانيين الذين لا والد لهم ولا والدة ولا طينة ولا مادة، ولا يُسمّى شيء منهم إلهاً.

وإنّ قلتم إنّكم جعلتموه إلهاً لآياته الظاهرة، فلقد كان سبباً إلى غايات المجد، لكنّه خبر في الإنجيل بأنّه مربوب موهوب وأنّه راغب راهب. وقد فعل النبيّ إيلشع 38v عليه السلام بعض ما يشبه فعله وأنّه أحيّا في حياته ميتاً وبعد وفاته ميتاً. وأحيّا

1B: أتما. 2A and B: وبُهتاناً ومحالاً وغلطاً. 3B: ألزمه. 4B omits this word. 5A and B: فرياً. 6A and

B: فلا. 7B: يجعلوه. 8B: تسميركم.

John the disciple says in his Gospel something that confirms what I say and refutes what the exegete says. This is that Christ said, 'If I were to witness to myself, my witness would not be true, but another than I witnesses to me.'<sup>174</sup> By this he makes clear that the interpretation given by the exegete is wrong, absurd and lying. Also, if John alone had heard the herald's voice and around him there was the crowd being baptised, or people had heard something similar and then did not make it known, and if the prophet John and his disciples had doubted Christ, there can be no blame on others who doubt about him.

The question about their naming Christ God: Say to them, You have dared to do something unheard of in your naming a human being the eternal Creator. This inevitably transgresses one of the natural qualities, whether you are making him eternal God or the habitation for the eternal Creator, | whether because Christ said this about himself, or because his disciples who passed his religion on to you said this about him, or because he exhibited the kind of signs and miracles that merited you making him God, or because he ascended to heaven, or because of the wonder of his birth and circumstances.

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If you say that you make him God because of the wonder of his birth and circumstances, his birth and being are no more wonderful than the existence of Adam, because he had no mother or father.<sup>175</sup> Nor is Christ's birth more wonderful either than the birth of the angels and spirits, who have no male or female progenitor or clay or material component, and none of them is called a god.

If you say that you make him God because of his manifest signs, then indeed he was pre-eminent to the bounds of distinction, though he announced in the Gospel that he was subordinate and given to, and that he had wants and knew fear. The prophet Elisha (peace be upon him) performed some things that resembled his actions, for in his lifetime he raised a dead person, and after |

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<sup>174</sup> John 5:31–32.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Q 15:26, 'We created man from sounding clay'. In Q 3:59 Jesus is directly compared with Adam, both being created from dust.

إيليا النبيّ ميّتا، وبارك في دقيق العجوز ودهنها فلم ينفذ<sup>1</sup> ما [في] جرّتها من الدقيق، ولا ما في قارورتها من الدهن سبع سنين. وسأل الله سبحانه أن يحبس<sup>2</sup> المطر سبع سنين.<sup>3</sup>

وإنّ قلم إنّ المسيح أطعم من أرغفة آلافاً من الناس، فهذا نبيّ الله وكليمه موسى سأل الله سبحانه فأطعم قومه أربعين سنة المنّ والسلوى.

وإنّ كان المسيح صاح بالبحر فسكتت أمواجه، فقد ضرب موسى بعصاه البحر ففرقه وعبر قراره خلق من بني إسرائيل كثير، ثمّ فجرّ من الحجر القاسي والصخر اثنتي عشرة عيناً لكلّ سبط من بني إسرائيل عيناً. وضرب أهل مصر بعشر آيات من العذاب. أوّلها أنّه ألقى عصاه فصارت ثعباناً وابتلعت عصا السحرة. والثاني أنتن المياه وموت ما فيها من السمك. والثالثة أنّه أرسل عليهم الضفادع فامتلاّت<sup>4</sup> منها المنازل والعمران. والرابعة أنّه سلّط على أبدانهم القمل.<sup>39r</sup> الخامسة<sup>5</sup> أنّه بعث عليهم الذباب وهوام الأرض. والسادسة أنّه أمات بهائمهم

these words are added in the margin in A. <sup>1</sup>B: ينفذ. <sup>2</sup>B: يحبس. <sup>3</sup> سنين. <sup>4</sup>B: فأقتلت. <sup>5</sup>B: والخامسة.



his death a dead person.<sup>176</sup> The prophet Elijah raised a dead person,<sup>177</sup> and he blessed the widow's flour and oil, and so the flour in her jar and the oil in her flask did not give out for seven years.<sup>178</sup> And he asked God, blessed be he, to stop the rain for seven years.<sup>179</sup>

If you say that Christ fed thousands of people from some loaves,<sup>180</sup> the prophet of God and the one to whom he spoke,<sup>181</sup> Moses, entreated God, blessed be he, and he fed his people with manna and quails for forty years.<sup>182</sup>

If Christ called out to the sea and its waves were stilled,<sup>183</sup> Moses struck the sea with his staff and parted it, and great numbers of the People of Israel crossed through the deep.<sup>184</sup> Then he split the hard stone and rock into twelve springs, a spring for each tribe of the People of Israel.<sup>185</sup> He struck the people of Egypt with ten signs which were punishments.<sup>186</sup> The first of them is that he threw down his staff and it became a snake and it swallowed up the magicians' staffs.<sup>187</sup> The second is that the water became putrid and killed the fish that were in it.<sup>188</sup> The third is that he sent upon them frogs so that | their houses and dwellings were filled with them.<sup>189</sup> The fourth is that he inflicted lice upon their bodies.<sup>190</sup> The fifth is that he sent upon them flies and vermin of the earth.<sup>191</sup>

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176 2 Kings 4:32–37; 13:21.

177 1 Kings 17:17–23.

178 1 Kings 17: 8–16.

179 1 Kings 17:1, though no specific period is mentioned. In Luke 4:25, the period is specified as three and a half years.

180 E.g. Matthew 14:15–21; 15:32–38.

181 In Q 4:164, Moses is given the epithet *kalīm Allāh*.

182 Exodus 16:2–8, though there is no mention of Moses praying to God on the people's behalf. The less detailed references in the Qur'ān (e.g. 2:57; 7:160; 20:80) show clearly that 'Alī is referring to the biblical account.

183 Matthew 8:24–26.

184 Exodus 14:16, 21–23, though Moses' action of actually striking the sea is only made explicit in Q 26:63.

185 Exodus 17:6, and cf. Q 2:60; 7:160.

186 Exodus 7–12, mentioning ten plagues, beginning with the second sign listed here, the Nile and its waters becoming blood, and ending with the killing of the first-born, which 'Alī does not include. In Q 17:101 (cf. 7:133) nine signs, *āyāt*, are mentioned.

187 Exodus 7:8–13.

188 Exodus 7:14–25, in which Moses turns the Nile and all the water from it to blood, so that 'the fish will die and the river will stink'.

189 Exodus 8:1–15.

190 Exodus 8:16–19.

191 Exodus 8:20–32.

كلّها ما خلا دواب بني إسرائيل خاصته. السابعة أنّه ضرب أبدانهم كلّها<sup>1</sup> بالقروح. الثامنة أنّه أنزل عليهم البرد الذي أفسد أشجارهم كلّها. التاسعة أنّه أرسل في<sup>2</sup> بلدانهم كلّها الدماء والجراد. العاشرة أنّه أتاهاهم بظلمة ركبت فيهم ثلاثة أيام بلياليها. فهذه أشهر وأكثر ممّا يحكيه الإنجيل لأنّها كانت بحضرة أهل مصر وبحضرة بني إسرائيل كلّهم.

وإنّ قلم إنّكم إنّما<sup>3</sup> سمّيموه إلهاً وإبناً لأنّه تنبأ على ما يكون بعده، فقد فعل ذلك عامّة الأنبياء وإنّما سمّوا بهذا الاسم لذلك.

وإنّ قلم إنّما سمّيموه إلهاً لأنّه إدعى، فقد أبطلتم فعله، لأنّه أقرّ أنّ له إلهاً في قوله وهو مصلوب: "يا إلهي يا إلهي لم خذلتني". وقال متى في الفصل التاسع<sup>39v</sup> عشر من إنجيله محتجاً بنبوّة إشعيا في المسيح عن الله عزّ وجلّ أنّه قال: "هذا عبدي الذي اصطفيته وحببي الذي ارتاحت نفسي له". وقال متى في الفصل الثامن من إنجيله إنّ المسيح قال: "إنّي أشكرك يا أبي ملك<sup>4</sup> السموات والأرض".<sup>5</sup> وقال متى في الفصل التاسع من إنجيله: "مَنْ عمل بشبه<sup>6</sup> أبي الذي في السماء فهو أخي وهو أختي وهو أمّي". وقال متى في الفصل التاسع عشر من إنجيله إنّ المسيح قال لتلاميذه: "إنّ أباكم السماوي واحد فرد". وقال متى في الفصل العاشر من إنجيله إنّ يسوع انتقل إلى مدينة [ال]ناصرة وقال للناس: "ليس من

<sup>1</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>A and B: ما.

<sup>4</sup>B: الثامن من إنجيله أنّ المسيح قال اني اشكرك يا أبي ملك السموات والارض وقال<sup>5</sup>. ملات:

<sup>6</sup>B: يشبه. these words are added in the margin in A. متى في الفصل

The sixth is that he caused all their cattle to die with the exception of the beasts of the Israelites, his chosen ones.<sup>192</sup> The seventh is that he struck every one of their bodies with ulcers.<sup>193</sup> The eighth is that he sent down on them hail which ruined all their trees.<sup>194</sup> The ninth is that he sent into all their lands blood<sup>195</sup> and locusts.<sup>196</sup> The tenth is that he brought darkness for them, which remained with them for three days and nights.<sup>197</sup> These are more widely known and are more numerous than what the Gospel relates, because they happened openly before all the people of Egypt and the People of Israel.

If you say that you have called him God and Son because he predicted what would be after him, all the prophets did this, and they have expressly been given this name because of this.<sup>198</sup>

If you say that you call him God because he claimed to be son,<sup>199</sup> you invalidate his action, because he affirmed that he had a God in his words when he was crucified, | 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'<sup>200</sup> Matthew says in Chapter 19 of his Gospel, citing a prophecy of Isaiah about Christ from God, great and mighty, that says, 'This is my servant whom I have chosen, and my beloved with whom I am pleased.'<sup>201</sup> In Chapter 8 of his Gospel Matthew says that Christ said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of the heavens and earth.'<sup>202</sup> In Chapter 9 of his Gospel Matthew says, 'The one who acts as does my Father who is in heaven is my brother, my sister, my mother.'<sup>203</sup> In Chapter 19 of his Gospel Matthew says that Christ said to his disciples, 'Your Father who is in heaven is one, single.'<sup>204</sup> In Chapter 10 of his Gospel Matthew says that Jesus went to the town of Nazareth and said to the people, 'A prophet is not respected except in

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192 Exodus 9:1–7.

193 Exodus 9:8–12.

194 Exodus 9:13–26.

195 In the biblical account the only mention of blood is in the first plague, Exodus 7:14–25. Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. 53, n. 178, plausibly suggests reading *al-namal*, 'flies', in place of *al-dimā*.

196 Exodus 10:1–20.

197 Exodus 10:21–28.

198 The name *nabī*, 'prophet', which is related to the verb *tanabba*, 'to make predictions'.

199 Reading *idda'ā*; Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 884, gives one meaning of the eighth form as 'to assert a relationship as son'.

200 Matthew 27:46||Mark 15:34.

201 Matthew 12:18, citing Isaiah 42:1.

202 Matthew 11:25.

203 Matthew 12:50.

204 Matthew 23:9.

نبيّ يستحقّ به إلا في مدينته"، فاعترف أنّه نبيّ. وقال متى في الفصل العشرين من إنجيله إنّ المسيح أقبل، أخذته اليهود يتحرّون ويغتمّ ويقول لتلامذته: "قد غشيتني كرب الموت"، وإنّ انتبه قليلاً ثمّ خرّ على وجهه، وجعل يبكي ويتضرّع إلى الله ويقول: "يا إلهي إنّ أمكن صرف الكأس عني فاصرفها، بل لا يكون ما أشاء أنا بل ما تشاء أنت". فكانّ قائل هذا القول شاكّ في قدرة الله ونفاذ مشيئته، لأنّ من قال يا ربّ إنّ أمكن صرف هذه البليّة عني، فعلت ذلك، فهو شاكّ في قدرة الله. ولا يخلو قائل هذا من أن يكون قد علم أنّ الله لا يعجزه شيء. فما معنى قوله: "إنّ أمكن ذلك"، أو قد علم أنّه لا يمكنه ذلك؟ فما معنى المسألة والتضرّع؟ ولئن قلتم إنّ المسيح لم يعلم أنّه مقتول فيما يزعمون أو غير مقتول، فليس بخالق أزليّ ولا مسكن فيه. وإنّ كان قد علم ما يفعل به وهو الله، فإلى من سأل أو إلى من تضرّع؟ وإنّ كان لم يعلم فليس بإله، وكيف لم يعلم وقد قال فيما يزعمون: "الويل لمن يسلم ابن الله على يده، فلو لم يولد كان خيراً له". وقد علم أنّ ذلك حتم من الله تعالى لا مردّ له، فما معنى التضرّع والإبتهاال فيما لا يمكن ولا يكون؟

وقال شمعون الصفا، رئيس الحواريين، في الفصل الثاني من قصص الحواريين التي ألّفها لوقا التلميذ: "رجال بني اسرائيل، اسمعوا مقالتي، أنّ يسوع الناصري هو رجل ظهر لكم من عند الله بالقوة والتأييد والعجائب التي أجراها الله على يديه، وأنكم أسلمتموه وقتلتموه، فأقام الله يسوع<sup>1</sup> هذا من بين الموتى". فأبّي شهادة أبين وأفصح من هذا؟ وأبّي رجل عندكم<sup>2</sup> أوثق من شمعون الصفا وهو يُخبر— كما

<sup>1</sup>A and B: يسوعاً <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the margin in A.

his own town',<sup>205</sup> acknowledging that he was a prophet. In Chapter 20 of his Gospel Matthew says that when the Jews were coming to arrest him Christ was tormented and distressed, and he said to his disciples, 'The anguish of death has come over me'. | And he kept watch for a while and then fell on his face and began to weep and to beg God saying, 'My God, if it is possible to take the cup from me then take it, but let be not what I will but what you will.'<sup>206</sup> It is as though the one who said these words was in doubt about the power of God and the fulfilment of his will, because anyone who could say, 'Lord, if it is possible to take this distress from me, you will do this', would be in doubt about God's power. But anyone who could say this would not be without knowledge that God was not weak in any way. So what is the meaning of his words, 'If this is possible'? Or did he know that this was not possible for him? So what is the meaning of the question and the entreaty?<sup>207</sup> And if you say that Christ did not know whether he would be killed (according to what they claim) or not killed, he would not have been eternal Creator nor dwelling within him. And if he did know what would be done to him and he was God, then to whom did he ask this question, and who did he entreat? If he did not know, then he was not God, and how could he not know when he said | (according to what they claim), 'Woe to him by whom the Son of God is given up. It would be good for him if he had never been born'?<sup>208</sup> He knew that this was a decree from God almighty which could not be averted, so what was the meaning of entreaty and supplication about something that was impossible and could not come to be?

Simon Peter, the leader of the disciples, says in Chapter 2 of the Stories of the Apostles, which Luke the disciple composed,<sup>209</sup> 'Men of Israel, listen to what I have to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man who appeared to you from God with power, support, and miracles which God caused to happen through him. You handed him over and killed him, but God raised this Jesus from among the dead.'<sup>210</sup> What testimony is clearer or more obvious than this, and what man among you is more reliable than Simon Peter? As you have seen, he announced

205 Cf. Matthew 13:57, changing the meaning of the original.

206 Matthew 26:37–39.

207 'Alī's argument is that on the one hand Jesus's words imply that he thought God could not do what he requested, but on the other his very action in making the request implies that he thought God could do what he requested. So there is confusion in the very statement attributed to him in the Gospel.

208 Matthew 26:24, with 'Son of man' in place of 'Son of God', as here.

209 Here 'Alī exhibits (possibly with some self-consciousness) the knowledge of the New Testament he would have acquired as a younger man.

210 Acts 2:22–24.

ترون—أنّ المسيح رجل وأنه من عند الله وأنّ الآيات التي ظهرت هي بأمر الله وأنّ الله بعثه من بين الموتى.

41r وقال شمعون الصفا في هذا الكتاب بعد القول الأوّل: "واعلموا يا بني اسرائيل قولاً علماً يقيناً أنّ الله جعل يسوع<sup>1</sup> هذا الذي قتلتموه رباً ومسيحاً". وقال شمعون في الفصل الخامس من هذا الباب: "إنّ إله آبائنا أقام يسوع المسيح الذي قتلتموه وأنتم ظالمون". وقال لوقا في آخر إنجيله: "إنّ المسيح عرض لقيلوقا<sup>2</sup> ولوقا تلميذه في الطريق، وهما محزونان، فقال لهما وهما لا يعرفانه: "ما بالكما محزونين؟" فقالا له: "كأنّك أنت غريب وحدك ببيت المقدس، إنّ كنت لا تعلم ما حدث فينا في هذه الأيام من أمر يسوع الناصري، فإنّه كان رجلاً تقيّاً قوياً في فعله وقوله عند الله وعند الأمة، أخذوه وقتلوه". فهذا قوله وقول تلاميذه، فإنّ كان دينه فيه، فقد خالفتم تلك الشريعة ولزمتكم الحجّة.

41v وإنّ<sup>3</sup> قلتم إنكم جعلتموه إلهاً لأنّه | صعد إلى السماء، فهذا أخنوخ وإيليا صعدا إلى السماء وهما فيها حيّان مكرّمان إلى الآن، ما يشكهما شوكّة، أفلا تكفون بهذا عبرة وبيانا؟

وإنّ قلتم إنّما جعلتموه إلهاً لأنّ الأنبياء سمّته إلهاً وربّاً، فاعلموا أنّ اسم الإله لم يزل واقعاً في اللغة كلّها على غير الله. وما زالت الهند والروم والسريانيون والعبرانيون والفرس والقبط يسمّون ملكهم إلهاً، ويسمّون النجوم أنوار السماء وألهة كلّها.

<sup>1</sup>A and B: يسوعاً. <sup>2</sup>B: لقيلوقا. <sup>3</sup>B: إن.

that Christ was a man and that he was from God, and that the signs that appeared were by the command of God, and that God resurrected him from among the dead.

Simon Peter says in this book, following the previous words, 'Know, men | of Israel, it is certain knowledge that God made this Jesus whom you killed Lord and Christ.'<sup>211</sup> In Chapter 5 of this section Simon says, 'The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Christ whom you killed, and you were doing wrong.'<sup>212</sup> At the end of his Gospel Luke says that Christ appeared to Cleopas and Luke his disciple<sup>213</sup> on the road as they were grieving, and he said to them, though they did not recognise him, 'What is the reason for your grieving?' They said to him, 'You must be the only stranger in Jerusalem if you do not know what has happened among us in these days concerning Jesus the Nazarene. He was a God-fearing man, strong in his deed and word before God and the community. They took him and killed him.'<sup>214</sup> These are his words and the words of his disciples, and if his religion is among them you have set this Creed against them, and you need to find proof.

If you say that you have made him God because | he ascended into heaven, well, Enoch<sup>215</sup> and Elijah<sup>216</sup> ascended into heaven and they are both there alive, revered until now and unharmed. Are you not satisfied with this example and explanation?

If you say that you have made him God particularly because the prophets call him God and Lord, then know that in all languages the name 'god' has been used for beings other than God. The Indians, the Romans, the Syrians, the Hebrews, the Persians and the Egyptians have always called their kings 'god', and they call all the stars lights and gods of heaven.

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<sup>211</sup> Acts 2:36.

<sup>212</sup> Acts 5:30.

<sup>213</sup> Cleopas is named in the Gospel account, Luke 24:18, though the other disciple on the Emmaus road is not.

<sup>214</sup> Luke 24:13–20.

<sup>215</sup> Genesis 5:24; and also Q 19:56–57, referring to Idris, who is often identified with Enoch.

<sup>216</sup> 2 Kings 2:11.

41r

41v

وقال موسى عليه السلام في السفر الأول من التوراة: "إِنَّ بَنِي<sup>1</sup> الله دخلوا<sup>2</sup> على بنات الناس ورأوهن<sup>3</sup> برؤية بارعات الجمال<sup>4</sup>، فتزوجوا منهن". وقال الله تعالى لموسى عليه السلام في السفر من قصة المخرج: "إِنِّي جَعَلْتُكَ إلهًا لفرعون". وقال داود عليه السلام، وهو يخاطب قومًا بالروح، في المزمور الثاني والثمانين: "أقام<sup>42r</sup> في جماعة الآلهة". وهذا "الآلهة" في العبرانية كما قلنا. فأما مَنْ نقله إلى السريانية فقد حرّفه وقال: "أقام الله في جماعة الملائكة". وقال في هذا المزمور وهو يخاطب قومًا بالروح: "ولقد ظننتُ أنكم آلهة وأنكم أبناء الله كلّكم". فأخبر<sup>5</sup> أن إسم الآلهة وإسم النبوة واقعان على الناس أيضًا.

وإسم الربّ أيضًا واقع على السادات فيقال: "هذا ربّ البيت وربّ المال". وقال إشعياء: "عرف الثور مَنْ اقتناه والحمار مربطه، ولم يعرف ذلك بنو إسرائيل". وقال داود في المزمور الثامن مخاطبًا لله عزّ وجلّ ومنبئًا عن المسيح: "مَنْ الرجل الذي ذكرته والإنسان الذي أمرته، جعلته دون الملائكة قليلًا، وألبسته الكرامات والمجد، وملّكته على خلقك". ويحتج<sup>6</sup> بهذا القول بولص في تثبيت المسيح، فأخبر داود النبيّ بأنّ المسيح رجل وإنسان مأمور، وأنّه دون الملائكة، إله لحم ودم. وقال داود في المزمور العاشر والمئة وشبهه المسيح للمكردق<sup>7</sup>، وقال: "إِنَّ الله تعالى

<sup>1</sup>A and B: نبي. <sup>2</sup>A and B: دخل. <sup>3</sup>B: ورادهن. <sup>4</sup>This word is added in the margin in A. <sup>5</sup>B:

ملكك زدق. <sup>6</sup>B: يحتج. <sup>7</sup>B: الملك زدق.



Moses (peace be upon him) says in Chapter 1 of the Torah, ‘The sons of God went into the daughters of men and they saw them with their surpassingly beautiful appearance, and they married them.’<sup>217</sup> And God almighty said to Moses (peace be upon him) in the book of the story of the Exodus, ‘I have made you a god to Pharaoh.’<sup>218</sup> David (peace be upon him), speaking to the people through the Spirit, says in Psalm 82, | ‘He stood up in the assembly of gods.’<sup>219</sup> This is ‘gods’ in Hebrew, as we have said, but those who have translated it into Syriac have made changes to it and said, ‘God dwelt in the assembly of angels.’<sup>220</sup> In this Psalm, speaking to the people through the Spirit, he says, ‘I thought you were gods, and all of you sons of God,’<sup>221</sup> declaring that the term ‘gods’ and the term ‘sonship’ were also used for humans. 42r

The term ‘lord’ is also used for leaders: it is said, ‘this is the lord of the house,’ and ‘the lord of the possessions’. Isaiah says, ‘The ox knows who owns it and the ass the place where its master keeps it, but the People of Israel do not know this.’<sup>222</sup> David says in Psalm 8, addressing God, great and mighty, and foretelling Christ, ‘Who is man that you should have remembered him, and the human that you should have commanded him and placed a little below the angels, and clothed him in honour and glory, and made king over your creation?’<sup>223</sup> Paul employs these words to confirm Christ,<sup>224</sup> though the prophet David announces that Christ was a man and a human under command, and that he was below the angels, | flesh and blood. David says in Psalm 110, comparing Christ with Melchizedek, ‘God almighty has sworn and has not retracted, “You 42v

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217 Genesis 6:2.

218 Exodus 7:1.

219 Psalm 82:1.

220 The original reads: ‘God stands in the congregation of God; he judges among the gods.’ This being so, ‘Ali has a point when he says that there has been some tampering (*fa-qad harrafahu*) with the Syriac translation to make it doctrinally more acceptable.

221 Psalm 82:6.

222 Isaiah 1:3.

223 Psalm 8:5–6.

224 Hebrews 2:7.

أقسم ولم يخلف<sup>1</sup> أنك كاهن إلى الأبد مثل ملكردق، وملكردق الكاهن هو ابن أرنخشد بن نوح، وعاش إلى أيام موسى عليه السلام.

فالآب والإبن وروح القدس قد اجتمعت الأُمم على أن لكل إسم من أسمائهم معنى، وأن كل إسم لا معنى له لغو وخداج. ولا غنى بنا وبكم عن معرفة معنى الآب والإبن وروح القدس وأن موسى أبان بإسمه أو لقبه بلقب، فقد أنكر فيه وثوقاً<sup>2</sup> ووزره.<sup>3</sup> فكيف بمن سَمَّى الله بأسماء لا يُعرف معانيها، وهو لا يأمن أن يكون على سبيل سخطه وفتنة<sup>4</sup> واقتراء؟ فإن كنتم سمّيت الله بهذه الأسماء على الحقيقة امتحنّاها، فإن كانت على المجاز والإشتقاق أجزناها.

43r فقد يسمّى الرجل "أباً" و"والداً" لوجوه<sup>5</sup> كثيرة. أو لها التوليد. والثاني بالإستعارة، كالصبيّ يسمّى عمّه ومن ربّه أو علمه أو خرّجه واصطنع إليه معروفاً: "أباً"، ويسمّى مشايخ قومه وأجداده أيضاً: "آباء"، فقد يُقال لآدم "أبو البشر". وقد سمعت علماء النصراني يقولون إنه إنما سُمّي الله "أباً" إلاّ لأنّه مُبدع الأشياء ومولّدّها. وكذلك أيضاً معنى الإبن لوجوه: إما الولادة أو للتبني، فقد يُقال إن فلاناً تبني<sup>6</sup> فلاناً أي ربّه وعلمه وخرّجه واصطنع إليه معروفاً. ويُقال لأهل الأدب "أبناء الأدب" و"إخوانه". فإن قلتم إنكم سمّيت الله بهذه الأسماء على المجاز والإشتقاق، فهذا جائز على أنّها إذا كانت على المجاز كان فيها بطلان شريعة الإيمان وفساد دين النصراني كلّّه، لأنّ أهل النصرانية مجتمعون<sup>8</sup> على أنّ لهذه الأسماء حقائق، والحقائق لا تكون مغطاة متشكّكة، بل تكون مكشوفة مُفصّحة.

<sup>1</sup>B: يحلف. <sup>2</sup>A and B: وثوقاً. <sup>3</sup>B: وزر. <sup>4</sup>B: وفتنته. <sup>5</sup>B: اوجوه. <sup>6</sup>B: تبني. <sup>7</sup>B: قال. <sup>8</sup>A and B:

are a priest for ever like Melchizedek".<sup>225</sup> The priest Melchizedek was the son of Arpashad, son of Noah, and he lived until the time of Moses (peace be upon him).<sup>226</sup>

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: The nations agree that every one of their names has a meaning, and that any name that has no meaning is nonsense and abortive. Both we and you have some need to know the meaning of 'the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit', and that Moses explained his name, or gave him his title, and rejected of him both dependence and sin.<sup>227</sup> So how can anyone give God names whose meanings are not known, when he does not know whether they will be a cause of annoyance to him, dissension against him, or slander? So if you have given God these names literally let us examine them, but if they are figurative and derivative, let us allow them.

A man can be named 'father' and 'progenitor' in many ways. The first of them | is procreation. The second is by metaphor, as when a child uses 'father' for his uncle or the person who brings him up or teaches him or educates him or does him good, and he will also call the elders of his family and his grandparents 'fathers': thus, Adam is called 'the father of humanity'. And I have heard Christian scholars say that God is really called 'father' because he is the Initiator and Progenitor of things. In the same way the meaning of 'son' is multiple, either through birth or adoption. Thus, it is said that someone adopts someone, that is, he brings him up, teaches him, educates him and does him good. And people of culture are called 'sons of culture' and its 'brothers'. So, if you say that you have given God these names figuratively or derivatively, this is allowable, although if they are figurative they imply that the Creed is false and the whole of the Christian faith is incorrect. This is because the followers of Christianity unanimously agree that there are realities to these names, and the realities are not concealed or derived but are obvious and distinct.

43r

<sup>225</sup> Psalm 110:4.

<sup>226</sup> According to Genesis 10:22–24, Arpashad/Arphaxad was a son of Shem, son of Noah, and was father of Shelah; there is no mention of Melchizedek among his descendants. Given that Melchizedek's only appearance in the Hebrew Bible is in a meeting with Abraham, Genesis 14:18–20, the reference here to him living to the time of Moses must either be a lapse of memory on 'Alī's part, or a scribal error for Abraham. Ibn al-'Assāl, *Ṣaḥā'ih*, p. 79, dismisses it as just like other claims that 'Alī makes.

<sup>227</sup> This rather obscure clause is very close to the description of Melchizedek as found in Hebrews 7:3. Tacitly acknowledging this, Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. 58, moves it to the end of the previous paragraph, though even there it does not add much to the meaning of 'Alī's argument. It is not unlikely that the text has been severely disrupted at this point.

43v فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ<sup>1</sup> لَمْ يَكُنْ الْأَبُ وَالِدًا، فَلَا مَعْنَى لِاسْمِ الْأَبَوَّةِ وَالْبَنَوَّةِ، وَفِي ذَلِكَ بَطْلَانُ الشَّرِيعَةِ وَتَكْذِيبُهَا. فَإِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ وَالِدًا، فَلَا يَخْلُو<sup>2</sup> مَا أَنْ يَكُونَ أَوْلَدَ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَزَلْ، أَوْ شَيْئًا مُحَدَّثًا لَمْ يَكُنْ ثُمَّ كَانَ. فَإِنْ قَلَمَ إِنَّهُ أَوْلَدَ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَزَلْ، فَهَذَا الْمَحَالُ وَالْبَهْتُ، فَإِنَّ الَّذِي لَمْ يَزَلْ لَا يَكُونُ مَوْلُودًا، وَإِنَّ الَّذِي أَوْلَدَ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَكُنْ فَأَب<sup>3</sup> حَادِثٍ حَدَثَ عَنْهُ. وَفِي هَذَا بَطْلَانُ شَرِيعَةِ الْإِيمَانِ الَّتِي تَقُولُ إِنَّهُ خَالِقُ غَيْرِ مَخْلُوقٍ. وَقَدْ يَحِلُّ مَا قَلَمْتُمُوهُ بِأَيْسَرِ قَوْلٍ وَأَوْجَز<sup>3</sup> خَطَابٍ، وَهُوَ أَنَّ هَذَا الْإِبْنَ إِنْ كَانَ أَزَلِيًّا فِي شَرِيعَةِ الْإِيمَانِ فَلَيْسَ بِمَوْلُودٍ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مَوْلُودًا فَلَيْسَ بِأَزَلِيٍّ لِأَنَّ اسْمَ الْأَزَلِيَّةِ يَقَعُ عَلَى مَنْ لَا أَوَّلَ لَهُ وَلَا آخِرَ، وَمَعْنَى الْمَوْلُودِ أَنَّهُ حَدَثَ لَهُ أَوَّلٌ وَلَهُ آخِرٌ مَفْعُولٌ مِثْلُ قَوْلِكَ: "مَالٌ مَمْدُودٌ مَحْدُودٌ، وَرَجُلٌ مَحْمُودٌ وَمَذْمُومٌ، وَوَلَدٌ مَوْلُودٌ". فَكَيْفَمَا أَرَدْتُمْ هَذَا الْقَوْلَ، إِنْ دَارَ عَلَى بَطْلَانِ الشَّرِيعَةِ، أَوْ تَصْيِيرِ هَذِهِ الْأَسْمَاءِ لَغَوًّا وَحَشَوًّا، لِأَنَّهُ 44r إِنْ كَانَ الْإِبْنَ أَزَلِيًّا، فَقَوْلُكُمْ "مَوْلُودٌ" لَا مَعْنَى لَهُ بَلْ هُوَ كَذِبٌ وَزُورٌ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مَوْلُودًا فَهُوَ مُحَدَّثٌ، وَفِي الْمَعْنَيْنِ جَمِيعًا بَطْلَانُ الشَّرِيعَةِ.

فَمَنْ عَبَثَ بِاللَّهِ وَسَمَّاهُ بِأَسْمَاءٍ لَا مَعْنَى لَهَا، فَقَدْ اجْتَرَأَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْعَبَثَ. وَمَنْ الْعَبَثَ وَالْهَزْلَ أَنْ يَقُولُوا مَرَّةً: "هُوَ مِثْلُ أَبِيهِ فِي قَدَمِهِ"، وَمَرَّةً يَقُولُونَ: "إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِثْلُهُ لِأَنَّهُ مَوْلُودٌ"، فَإِنَّ هَذَيْنِ الْإِسْمَيْنِ<sup>4</sup> لَا مَعْنَى لهُمَا. فَلِمَ قَلَمْتَ إِنْ الْإِبْنَ مَوْلُودٌ وَلَيْسَ بِوَالِدٍ، وَالْأَبُ لَيْسَ بِمَوْلُودٍ بَلْ وَالِدٌ؟ فَإِنْ كَانَ عِنْدَكُمْ فِي الْجَازِ أَنْ يُسَمَّى الْأَزَلِيُّ الْقَدِيمَ "إِبْنًا مَوْلُودًا"<sup>5</sup>، فَسَمُّوا الْأَبَ إِذَا "إِبْنًا" وَالْإِبْنَ "أَبًا". وَإِنْ لَا أَكْبَرْتُمْ ذَلِكَ، فَعَنَى الْأَبُ إِذَا غَيْرَ مَعْنَى الْإِبْنَ، وَالْأَبُ إِذَا وَالِدٌ قَدِيمٌ<sup>6</sup>، وَالْإِبْنَ مَوْلُودٌ حَدَثَ.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This word is repeated in A and B. <sup>2</sup>A and B: فالأب. <sup>3</sup>A: وأجر. <sup>4</sup>A and B: هذان الاسمان. <sup>5</sup>A and B: مولوداً حادثاً. <sup>6</sup>A and B: والداً قديماً. <sup>7</sup>A and B: مولوداً حادثاً.

But if | the Father is not a progenitor there is no meaning to the term ‘fatherhood’ or ‘sonship’, and in this the Creed is shown to be false and disproved. But if God is a progenitor then he must either have generated something that is eternal or something that is temporal, which was not and then was. If you say that he generated something that is eternal, this is impossible and false, because what is eternal is not generated, and one who generates something that was not is then father of a temporal being that has come into being from him. This shows the falseness of the Creed, which says that he<sup>228</sup> is Creator and not created. What you say can be shown to be impossible by the easiest word and the briefest statement, which is that if this Son is eternal in the Creed then he is not generated, and if he was generated then he is not eternal, because the term ‘eternity’ applies to a being who has no beginning or end, and the meaning of ‘generated’ is that he is temporal with a beginning and an end, produced, like someone saying, ‘Riches boundless and bounded’, ‘someone praised and blamed’, and ‘a born child is born’.<sup>229</sup> So, however you intend this statement, | it revolves around falsifying the Creed or making these names stuff and nonsense. For if the Son is eternal there is no meaning to your term ‘generated’ and it is a lie and falsehood, and if he was generated then he was temporal. And in both meanings the Creed is proved wrong.

43v

44r

One who abuses God and gives him names that have no meaning insolently levels abuse against God. And it is abusive and superficial for them to say at one time that he is like his Father in his eternity, and to say at another that he is not like him because he is generated. Thus these two names have no meaning. Why do you say that the Son is generated and is not a progenitor and the Father is not generated but a progenitor? For if you can say metaphorically that the timeless Eternal can be called Son and generated, then call the Father Son and the Son Father.<sup>230</sup> If you do not find this acceptable, then the meaning of ‘Father’ must be different from the meaning of ‘Son’, and the Father must be Progenitor and eternal and the Son generated and temporal.

<sup>228</sup> This must refer to the Son.

<sup>229</sup> Each of these sayings contains an inherent contradiction.

<sup>230</sup> ‘Alī brings the argument to the point where he can conclude that according to the way Christians use them, the two terms have no meaning. Cf. al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, *Radd*, p. 318.18–23.

ونسألكم أيضاً فنقول: لم سُمِّي الأب أباً والإبن إبناً؟ فإنه إن كان وجب للأب إسم الأبوة لقدمه، فالإبن أيضاً يستحق هذا الإسم بعينه إذا كان أيضاً هو قديماً مثله. 44v وإن كان الأب خالقاً فهو أيضاً خالق. وإن كان الأب عزيزاً عالماً، فالإبن عزيز عالماً.<sup>2</sup> تشهد شريعة الإيمان له بذلك في قولها: "إنه نزل لحفظنا وأنه خالق الخلائق كلها". ومن قدر على ذلك لم يكن إلا عزيزاً عالماً.

فهذه المعاني التي قد بينتها [تبطل]<sup>3</sup> إسم الأبوة والبنوة، وفي بطلانها بطلان الشريعة التي تقول: "إنه وُلِدَ من الله قبل العوالم"، وقولكم: "إننا نؤمن بالله الآب". فإذا كان<sup>4</sup> الإسمان لا معنى لهما، فكأنكم قلتم: "إن الآب مولود ولكنه ليس بمولود"، و"الله أب<sup>5</sup> ولكنه ليس بوالد". وذلك شبيه بقولكم: "إن المسيح هو الله والله ليس بالمسيح، وإنه مبعوث لكنه ليس برسول، وإنه رجل ذو لحم ودم ولكنه ليس<sup>6</sup> بعبد". فهذا كلام قبيح وقول مكفوف، وأمثالكم من العقلاء لا يقبل مثله، ولا يرى تهجين<sup>7</sup> نفسه ولا يتعرض لسخط<sup>8</sup> الله الذي يقول في التوراة: "إنه لن ينجو من يدي ناج". ولئن كان هذا الضرب من الكلام مقبولاً عندكم أن يقول قائل إن يسوع المسيح مسيح لكنه ليس بممسوح، وإن الإيمان به حق لكنه ليس بواجب، وإن الله خالق ليس بصانع. فإن كان هذا من الكلام محالاً وسقطاً، فكذلك ما قبله أن كان الإبن والأب متكافئين في القدرة

<sup>1</sup>A and B: قديم. <sup>2</sup>A and B: عزيزاً عالماً; عزيزاً عالماً: these words are added in the margin in

A. <sup>3</sup>This verb, which is omitted in A and B, is supplied in order to give sense to the sentence; cf. al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, *Radd*, p. 360. <sup>4</sup>A and B: كانت. <sup>5</sup>A and B: أباً. <sup>6</sup>B omits: وأنه. <sup>7</sup>تهجين. <sup>8</sup>B: ليسخط.

ليسخط. <sup>7</sup>B: تهجين. <sup>8</sup>B: ليسخط. <sup>7</sup>B: تهجين. <sup>8</sup>B: ليسخط.

We also ask you and say, Why is the Father called Father and the Son Son? For if the term 'fatherhood' is required for the Father because of his eternity, | then the Son too would merit this very term because he is also eternal like him. And if the Father is Creator, he is also Creator, and if the Father is great and knowing, then the Son is great and knowing. The Creed witnesses to this with regard to him in its statement, 'He came down for our salvation', and 'He is Creator of all created things'. A being capable of this cannot be other than great and knowing.

44v

These points which I have explained prove the terms 'fatherhood' and 'sonship' false, and with their being proved false the Creed, which says, 'He was begotten from God before the worlds', is proved false, as are your words, 'We believe in God the Father'. But if the two terms are meaningless, it would be as though you said that the Father was begotten but not begotten, that he is Father but not Progenitor. This resembles your words that Christ is God but God is not Christ, that he was sent but not a messenger, and that he was a man with flesh and blood but was not a servant. This is a repugnant statement and blind talk. People such as you who are intelligent | cannot allow such a thing, or countenance the debasement of themselves, or become exposed to the wrath of God, who says in the Torah, 'Not one shall be delivered from my hand'.<sup>231</sup> Do you find acceptable such words as when somebody says, 'Jesus Christ is Messiah but he is not anointed', 'Faith in him is right but is not required', and 'God is Creator but is not Maker'? For if such talk is impossible and worthless, then the above is the same, that the Son and Father should be equal in power and eternity. For what superiority and power does the Father have over him, to

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231 Deuteronomy 32:39.

والقدم. فبأيّ<sup>1</sup> فضل وسُلطان للآب عليه أمره ونهاه، فصار الآب باعثاً والإبن مبعوثاً والآب متبوعاً مطاعاً<sup>2</sup> [والإبن تابعاً مطيعاً]<sup>3</sup>؟

- فلاأي هذه الوجوه اتخذ الله أبناً؟ (p. 80).<sup>4</sup>
- إن المسيح يكون خمسة أقانيم (p. 81).
- فما دعاكم الى أن تسمّوا بعض الأمكنة الهأ (p. 82).
- ومحلّ للاله دون بعض (p. 82).
- وهو موجود في كلها بغير كيفية (p. 82).
- لن يخلو تدبيره اما أن يكون لكذا او لكذا (p. 83).
- لم يروه اصلح فساداً (p. 87).
- ولا قطع شعرة من حبائل الشيطان (p. 87).
- بل اورثهم الاستهزاء من سائر الناس (p. 87).
- شرذمة يسيرة (من اليهود) (p. 87).
- فهذه المعاني التي نفرتني عنكم معشر النصارى (p. 88).
- الذي آخره مما يدفع به عن نفسه (p. 88).
- فما اجراًكم بقولكم لو لم يأخذنا بقهر الآيات على اعتقادنا هذا وتذكرونه دائماً (p. 88).

<sup>1</sup>A and B: فأيّ; cf. al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, *Radd*, p. 360. <sup>2</sup>A breaks off at this point. <sup>3</sup>These words are supplied by al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb, *Radd*, p. 360. While al-Ḥasan may preserve other parts of the lost continuation of 'Alī's *Radd*, there is insufficient evidence in what follows in his work to allow a clear judgement about this. <sup>4</sup>This and the following numbers refer to the pages in C where these brief quotations are given.



command him and prohibit him, for the Father to be the sender and the Son the one sent, and the Father the one followed and obeyed and the Son the one following and obeying?

- So in which of these ways did God take a son? (p. 80)<sup>232</sup>
- That Christ was five hypostases. (p. 81)
- Then what of your claim that you call one of the locations divine? (p. 82)
- And indwelling of the Divinity and not others. (p. 82)
- And he was existent in all of them without modality. (p. 82)
- His control could only ever be for this reason or for that reason. (p. 83)
- They have not experienced him as remedying corruption. (p. 87)
- And he did not diminish Satan's trickery by the breadth of a hair. (p. 87)
- But he caused them to inherit the scorn of all people. (p. 87)
- A small group (of the Jews). (p. 87)
- So these are matters that have driven me away from you, Christians. (p. 88)
- Which is another of them that alienate him from himself. (p. 88)
- Why are you so bold as to say, 'If he had not attracted us by the triumph of the miracles, according to this belief of ours', and repeat it endlessly? (p. 88)

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<sup>232</sup> There follow the quotations of the lost parts of the *Radd* in Ibn al-'Assāl, *Ṣaḥā'ih*. Page numbers refer to the edition by Murqus Jirjis, Cairo, 1926/27.

- وكيف يحلّ في جسم انسان عرض من دون حلوله في روحه (pp. 89-90).
- أفما ترون أهل الأديان انما يصفون الله بالغلبة والعز؟ (p. 90).
- ومن العجب ان يحلّ الخالق في جسد فلا يسطع منه نور ولا ينثني عليه ويحفّ به، وكيف لم تنفطر له الجبال وتهرب الانهار كموسى، وكيف لم تظهر منه آيات اجلّ من آيات الانبياء من مشيه على الماء، وهلاك من قرب منه كالياس النبي (p. 90).
- ليعلم الناس أنه خالقهم (p. 91).
- فما باله لم يبطل بحجّته الخطيئة والموت كما زعمتم؟ (p. 92).
- ما ذكره من خروج الابن وخروج الروح ... فما الفرق بينهما؟ (p. 92).
- فكيف فرّ عنهم الشيطان فتركهم وتمكّن من ربّهم؟ (p. 94).
- فأين كانت هذه الرحمة عن الأنبياء وتمّته؟ (p. 96).
- ونزل الى شرذمة من اليهود (p. 97).
- ولمّ ما أهلكهم؟ (p. 97).
- الذي آخره فما هذا باقرار منه ولا انكار (p. 97).
- فما أدري ما دليلكم؟ (p. 99).
- وما منعه ان يحيي نفسه؟ (p. 99).
- فما منعه من نزوله من السماء ماشياً على الهواء؟ (p. 99).
- إنّ المسيح قال ان يكن فيكم من الإيمان وتمّته ... ولم نر نصرانياً قط أطاعته شجرة ولا مدرّة وتمّته (p. 100).
- كيف يغلب الموت من قتله الموت (p. 103).
- أنكم كنتم تقولون يا ربنا يسوع المسيح اغفر لنا، فصرتم تقولون يا ربنا يسوع المسيح قد غفرت لنا، فتبعم من أضلكم حديثاً وتركتم ما كان عليه أسلافكم (p. 103).

- How could an accident affect the body of a human without affecting its spirit? (pp. 89–90)
- Do you not see the followers of the religions describing God by victory and might alone? (p. 90)
- It is amazing that the Creator should come to dwell in a body but that light should not shine out from it, enfold it and surround it. And why did the mountains not split for him and the seas rush back, as with Moses?<sup>233</sup> And why were miracles not manifest from him that were greater than the miracles of the prophets, such as his walking on the water and the destruction of those who were coming near to him, as with Elijah?<sup>234</sup> (p. 90)
- So that people might know that he was their Creator. (p. 91)
- Why is it that he did not destroy sin and death at his coming, as you claim? (p. 92)
- [What he says about the emerging of the Son and the emerging of the Spirit] ... what is the difference between the two?
- So how could Satan flee from them [the prophets] and desert them, and have mastery over their Lord? (p. 94)
- So where was this mercy from the prophets, and so on? (p. 96)
- And he descended for a small group of Jews. (p. 97)
- Why did he not destroy them? (p. 97)
- What comes after it, this is neither a confirmation nor a denial of it. (p. 97)
- I have no idea what your evidence is. (p. 99)
- And what prevented him from reviving himself? (p. 99)
- So what prevented his descent from heaven, walking on the air? (p. 99)
- Christ said: 'If there were faith among you',<sup>235</sup> and so on ... We have not seen a single Christian who is obeyed by a tree or a lump of earth, and so on. (p. 100)
- How could someone who has been killed by death conquer death? (p. 103)
- You used to say: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us', but now you say: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, you have forgiven us'. So you follow those who presently misguide you, and you have abandoned what your ancestors accepted. (p. 103)

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<sup>233</sup> Numbers 20:7–12; Exodus 14:21–23.

<sup>234</sup> 2 Kings 2:8 (Elijah walks across the river, paralleling Jesus walking across the Sea of Galilee, Matthew 14:25–27; Mark 6:48–51; John 6:19–21); 2 Kings 1:9–14 (Elijah calls down fire on the details of soldiers who are pursuing him, in contrast to Jesus submitting to arrest, trial and execution).

<sup>235</sup> Matthew 17:20||Mark 11:23.

- لا أدري بمن اقتديتم في الطلب من المسيح (p. 104).
- وهل كان يدعو باسم المسيح ابراهيم والانبياء (p. 104).
- ومن بئس قيادكم انكم تنقادون إلى كل مقدم ابتدع لكم بدعة ضلالة او سنّة مخالفة فتقبلونها (p. 105).
- مثل الذي أحدث صوم نينوى وصوم العذارى واستقبال الاعياد بالصوم (p. 105).
- مثل ما سنّه مطران سمرقند الذي حرّم أكل لحوم الحمام وتأوّل فيها ان الروح القدس نزل في هيئة حمامة (p. 106).
- أنه (بولس الرسول) في رسائله لعن المسيح صراحاً (p. 106).
- فإن وجدتم في كتاب قول بولس ان كل مصلوب ملعون فقد خرج من التهمة ولم أخرج أنا (p. 107).
- ان مجمع نيقيا تفرّقوا وكفّر بعضهم بعضاً وتلاعنوا واستشهد على هذا بافتراق الملكية والنسبورية واليعقوبية (p. 107).
- وإلا فلا معنى لقوله ما صعد الى السماء إلا الذي نزل من السماء (p. 108).
- ولو كان نزل من السماء متجسماً لم يتجسّم من مريم (p. 109).
- إن المسيح اخرج القول مخرج الاستفهام لا الاخبار فقال أمن قبل ابراهيم كنت أنا؟ (p. 109).
- أو يكون التشابه في السرياني (p. 110).

- I have no idea who you have imitated in seeking Christ. (p. 104)
- And did Abraham and the prophets call upon the name of Christ?<sup>236</sup> (p. 104)
- And the worst of your behaviour is that you are led to anyone who offers to introduce a misleading innovation or contrary practice for you, and you accept it. (p. 105)
- Like someone who invents the Fast of Nineveh and the Fast of the Virgins, and the preparation for feasts by fasting.<sup>237</sup> (p. 105)
- Similar to what the Metropolitan of Samarqand legislated; he forbade the consumption of pigeon meat, explaining about it that the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove.<sup>238</sup> (p. 106)
- That [the Apostle Paul] in his epistles cursed Christ utterly. (p. 106)
- If you have found in any book Paul's words: 'All who are crucified are cursed';<sup>239</sup> he leaves the accusation but I will not. (p. 107)
- The Council of Nicea was split, some accused others of unbelief, and they cursed one another; he adduces as evidence for this the division of the Melkites, the Nestorians and the Jacobites.
- Otherwise there is no meaning to his words: 'Only the one who descended from heaven ascended into heaven'.<sup>240</sup> (p. 108)
- If he had descended from heaven incarnate, he would not have become incarnate from Mary. (p. 109)
- Christ made the statement in the form of a question not a statement, saying: 'Was I before Abraham?'<sup>241</sup> (p. 109)
- Or the obscurity was in Syriac. (p. 110)

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236 If Jesus had been before Abraham as he says in John 8:58, he would have been invoked by Abraham and other prophets.

237 Such observances as these do not go back to the beginning of Christian history but were instituted at various stages in the history of the Church. The Fast of Nineveh is a three-day fast in the weeks preceding Lent that was instituted in the sixth century, and the Fast of the Virgins is a three-day fast following Epiphany that was instituted in the seventh century (see R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, vol. 2, Oxford, 1901, col. 3380 under ζ and γ respectively). Both are particularly observed in the East Syrian Church. 'Abd al-Jabbār also mentions these two fasts (*Tathbīt*, p. 87).

238 This injunction must have been well-known, because 'Abd al-Jabbār also mentions that a metropolitan of Samarqand forbade the eating of fowl (*firākh*)—not pigeon meat as here—for the same reason that the Holy Spirit descended as a dove (*Tathbīt*, p. 127).

239 Galatians 3:13.

240 John 3:13.

241 Cf. John 8:58.

- إن متى قال انه ابن داود بن ابراهيم وابن ابراهيم لا يكون قبله (p. 110).
- إننا تمسكنا بعشرة مواضيع مشتبهة في الانجيل والرسائل وهي تكذب عشرين ألف موضع (p. 110).
- إن قول الانجيل ان الكلمة صار لحماً اما أن يكون الكاتب ترك منه غلطاً حرف ما أو من أو في حتى يكون التقدير الكلمة ما صار لحماً أو صار من الكلمة لحماً أو الكلمة حلّ في اللحم (p. 111).
- والآ فكللام الذي هو ابن الله لم يستحلّ لحماً (p. 111).
- إن يوحنا ذكر آيات لم يذكرها غيره من الثلاثة الانجيليين وأيضاً أخبر بما قاله المعمّد على غير ما أخبر به متى ولوقا ولم يذكره مرقس رأساً واذ قد انفرد كل واحد بشيء فلعله غلط فيه أو لم يصدق فيه (p. 112).
- إن المسيح ما أتى بعد المعمّد فقوله إن الذي يأتي اقوى مني عني به غير المسيح (p. 113).
- إن متى قال إن المسيح قام من بين الأموات مساء يوم السبت الذي في صبيحة يوم الاحد وقال أصحابه قام يوم الاحد وهذا غلط واختلاف (p. 114).
- إن المسيح لم يقم في الارض ثلاثة أيام كما قال (p. 114).

- Matthew said that he was the son of David, son of Abraham.<sup>242</sup> And the son of Abraham would not have been before him. (p. 110)
- ‘We have clung to ten ambiguous references in the Gospel and letters, and they belie the twenty thousand references.’<sup>243</sup> (p. 110)
- The statement of the Gospel: ‘The Word became flesh,’<sup>244</sup> is either that the writer erroneously omitted from it the word ‘not’ or ‘of’ or ‘in’, so that the supposition is: ‘The Word did not become flesh’, or ‘Part of the Word became flesh’, or ‘The Word indwelt the flesh’. (p. 111)
- Otherwise, the Word, who is the Son of God, did not change into flesh. (p. 111)
- John mentions miracles that the others from the three evangelists do not mention,<sup>245</sup> and also reports what the Baptist said differently from what Matthew and Luke report about it, while Mark reports nothing about it at all.<sup>246</sup> Thus, each one says isolated things, and has possibly been mistaken in it or not been right about it. (p. 112)
- Christ did not come after the Baptist, so by his words, ‘The one who comes after me is more powerful than I,’<sup>247</sup> he meant someone other than Christ. (p. 113)
- Matthew says that Christ rose from among the dead on the evening of the Saturday, which is in the morning of Sunday, while his colleagues say he rose on the Sunday.<sup>248</sup> This is wrong and at variance. (p. 114)
- Christ did not rise on earth for three days, as he said. (p. 114)

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<sup>242</sup> Matthew 1:1.

<sup>243</sup> This refers back to ‘Ali’s earlier comment about finding in the New Testament twenty thousand verses that attest to Jesus’s humanity, and only about ten ambiguous verses that refer to his divinity, above, pp. 122–123.

<sup>244</sup> John 1:14.

<sup>245</sup> E.g. Jesus changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana in Galilee (John 2:1–10), and raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38–44), which are exclusive to John.

<sup>246</sup> According to John 1:19–28, when John the Baptist is questioned by the deputation who come out from Jerusalem, he attests to himself and to the coming of Jesus. By contrast, according to Matthew 3:7–10 and Luke 3:7–9, he warns the crowds who come out to him about repentance. Mark is silent.

<sup>247</sup> Matthew 3:11.

<sup>248</sup> Matthew 28:1–6 describes how the two women who go to Jesus’s tomb at dawn on the Sunday are told by an angel that he has already risen. Mark 16:9 says that Jesus rose on the Sunday morning, and Luke 24:1–8 says that Jesus rose ‘on the third day’, though John 20:1–2 describes how Mary Magdalen visited the tomb before dawn on the Sunday morning and found it already empty.

- إن متى أخبر أن اللصين تهزأ بالمسيح وأن لوقا أخبر بأن أحدهما انتهر الآخر (pp. 115-116).
- وذكر يوحنا أنهما ما كلماه (p. 116).
- ولم يذكر مرقس شيئاً (p. 116).
- ومن الاختلاف أن المزمور العبراني قال إن الله قام في مجمع الآلهة، وفي السرياني مجمع الملائكة (p. 117).
- إن داود قال الإنسان الذي امرته وبولس لما استشهد بهذا قال الإنسان الذي دبرته (p. 118).
- إن إيمانك هو الكاهن الذي دفع لداود خبز التقدم كما في أسفار الملوك لا إيثار ولده كما قال المسيح (p. 118).
- لم يكن مولده سروراً عاماً لليهود وللأمم (p. 119).
- ولم يكن مختصاً لليهود وقد قيل ولد لكم اليوم مخلص (p. 119).
- صلب المسيح إن كان بارادة الله والمسيح موجباً لخلاص العالم من الخطية والموت فللشيطان واليهود حظ في هذه المكربة، وإن كان المسيح في ذلك مكرهاً مجبوراً فهو مذموم لا محمود (p. 119).
- ولليهود ان يعتذروا يوم القيامة بانهم انما قصدوا وعملوا ان فيه رضى لله (p. 120).
- وما اوجب احد عليكم الحجّة مثلي (p. 120).
- تضعون خشبة بأيديكم ثم تعلقونها في اعناقكم (p. 121).
- إن زرادشت وغيره قد دعوا إلى غير النصرانية بغير رغبة ولا رهبة (p. 122).



- Matthew reports that the two thieves mocked Christ, while Luke reports that one of them rebuked the other.<sup>249</sup> (pp. 115–116)
- John reports that neither of them spoke to him.<sup>250</sup> (p. 116)
- Mark says nothing.<sup>251</sup> (116)
- Among the contradictions is that the Hebrew Psalm says: ‘God rose up in the gathering of the gods’;<sup>252</sup> and in the Syriac: ‘gathering of the angels’. (p. 117)
- David says: ‘Man whom you have commanded’; and Paul, when he witnesses to this, ‘Man whom you have guided’.<sup>253</sup> (p. 118)
- Abimelech was the priest who laid before David the bread of the offering,<sup>254</sup> as is in the Books of Kings, not Abiathar his son, as Christ said.<sup>255</sup> (p. 118)
- His birth was not a universal joy for the Jews or the nations.<sup>256</sup> (p. 119)
- He was not the saviour of the Jews, even though it was said, ‘This day a saviour has been born for you’.<sup>257</sup> (p. 119)
- If the crucifixion of Christ was according to the will of God and of Christ as something necessary for the liberation of the world from sin and death, then Satan and the Jews had a part in this noble deed. But if Christ was forced and compelled in this, then he should be condemned not praised. (p. 119)
- The Jews should be allowed to plead on their own behalf on the day of resurrection that they only intended and acted so that God should be pleased with it. (p. 120)
- And no one has forced upon you an argument like me. (p. 120)
- You work a piece of wood with your hands and then you hang it around your necks. (p. 121)
- Zarādusht and others called to something other than Christianity without covetousness or fear. (p. 122)

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249 Matthew 27:44 refers to the two thieves taunting Jesus, and Luke 23:39–41 describes how one thief rebukes the other for taunting Jesus.

250 John 19:18 refers only to the two thieves being crucified together with Jesus.

251 Mark 15:27 also refers only to the thieves being crucified together with Jesus, though in 15:32 they both taunt him.

252 Psalm 81:1.

253 This is possibly Psalm 8:4, quoted in Hebrews 2:6 (traditionally attributed to Paul), though the verbs there, ‘be mindful of’ and ‘remember’, are not close to the versions here.

254 1 Samuel 21:1–6.

255 Mark 2:26.

256 Cf. Luke 2:10.

257 Luke 2:11.

## *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, Introduction

The second work that ‘Alī wrote with Christians in mind, *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, is quite different in tone and content from his *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā*, which it post-dates by five years at the most, and twice mentions. Whereas the earlier work is a direct attack on the coherence of Christian doctrines and their agreement with the text of scripture (and to some extent a criticism of the consistency between different parts of the Gospels), this is a demonstration of the prophetic status of Muḥammad, attested by his personal qualities, his ability to make prophecies and perform miracles, the holiness of his immediate followers as leaders of the community and, impressively, the attestation to him and Islam of some 130 passages from the Bible. The work fits into the genre of *dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, ‘proofs of prophethood’, and is one of the earliest surviving instances. Like the *Radd*, it remains something of a unique example of its genre, although a surprising number of later authors made use of the biblical proof-texts it contains, and through them it became an integral constituent of some prophetic apologetic traditions within Islam.

At the end of the work, ‘Alī explicitly says that he has named it *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*. While he does not explain this in so many words, what he says about it at this point gives an idea of what he means by it:

In this book of mine, which I have named *The Book of Religion and Empire*, the error and pointlessness of Judaism and the infamies and errors of dualism and fatalism have been fully set out, so that the reader will see clearly that they have been totally shattered and darkened over, and that the luminous light and the guiding belief is Islam alone. Blessings to God for the way he has guided me, and to his servant and caliph Ja‘far al-Mutawakkil ‘alā Llāh, Commander of the Faithful (may God prolong his life), for what he has firmly brought me to, and has drawn me and others of the protected people to by his attracting and alarming, his esteeming and appreciating all people together. For this reason, I have made the first part of this book of mine into a description of what my understanding has attained from his excellent qualities, the effects of his graciousness, the friendliness of his government, the success of his empire, the abundance of his conquests and the duties incumbent upon the people of the faith and upon those who are protected to love him, obey him and thank him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Below, pp. 472–473.

He makes clear that he regards the rule of Islam as having succeeded earlier religions,<sup>2</sup> and within Islam the success of the ‘Abbasids and of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil is palpable testimony that by the will of God there has been a change for the better in both faith and temporal rule. ‘Alī seems to have in the forefront of his mind a sense of the revolving of events and the replacement of one state of affairs by another<sup>3</sup> as an inevitable eventuality of God’s providential oversight to make the present rule the climax of an historical progression that stretches back through history.

He underlines this understanding in his comments earlier in the book on the prophecy of Daniel about Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the statue (Daniel 2:31–45):

[Daniel] has certified all the prophecies and testified that they are all about Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and not about any other. He has announced that the last of the empires and kingdoms is the empire that the God of heaven will establish, that it will possess all the realms of the earth and that it will stand for ever and ever and will not leave any other kingdom or rule without crushing it and destroying it.<sup>4</sup>

The empire of Muḥammad, which is evidently embodied in the dynasty of the ‘Abbasids, is the final form of rule and it will not be superseded.

The concise title that ‘Alī has given his work is therefore very eloquent of its intention. Suitable English translations might be ‘The book of religion and revolution’ or ‘The book of religion and regime’, though since Mingana’s original ‘Book of religion and empire’ has an enviable ring to it, there is no good reason to abandon it.

### The Authenticity of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*

There can be no doubt that *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* is an ancient work and that it was written by ‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī. Evidence that has come to light only in recent years removes any uncertainty about this, and silences any lurking criticisms about its authenticity or its authorship.

<sup>2</sup> Christianity is signally absent from the religions ‘Alī lists.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, Book 1, p. 934: *dawla*, ‘A turn, mutation, change, or vicissitude of time, or fortune, from an unfortunate and evil, to a good and happy state and condition’.

<sup>4</sup> Below, pp. 422–423.

Not long after Alphonse Mingana brought the work to scholarly attention in the early 1920s, first a translation published in 1922 and then an edition published in 1923, the Jesuit Paul Peeters raised doubts about it and insinuated that it might be a nineteenth century forgery.<sup>5</sup> This was in a review of the edition, and Peeters did not go into details. In the same year another Jesuit, Maurice Bouyges, also raised doubts about the work,<sup>6</sup> and then in a substantial essay published in 1925 he produced a series of arguments against its authenticity.<sup>7</sup> Both scholars continued to maintain their positions, and Bouyges added further lengthy comments as late as 1949,<sup>8</sup> this despite announcing in 1935 the discovery of the unique manuscript of the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, which is cited twice in the *Dīn wa-dawla*: he refused to admit that the work he had discovered and the one cited were the same.<sup>9</sup> Since these attacks of Peeters and Bouyges, no further arguments have been added to theirs, though their denial of the work has meant that generations of scholars have ignored it and an air of uncertainty has hovered around it.

The arguments put forward by Bouyges (Peeters relies on what can only be called circumstantial possibilities) are all incidental, identifying mainly minor problems in the text and elements that he did not think could reflect the period from which the work supposedly dates. He was not able to come up with a decisive argument or item of evidence, though the accumulation of details in his two essays was enough to ensure that the work has never received the full critical attention it deserves.

These difficulties aside, there is not only persuasive but now conclusive evidence to situate the work in the early medieval period and to attribute it to 'Alī al-Ṭabarī. These are so substantial that there can no longer be any doubt about it.

5 For a brief but complete account of the controversy raised by the publication of the work and the main participants in it, see S. Schmidtke, 'Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī and his transmission of biblical materials from *Kitāb al-dīn wa-al-dawla* by Ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī: the evidence from Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 20 (2009) 105–118, pp. 105–107, and Appendix 1, pp. 112–115. Peeters's review appeared in *Analecta Bollandiana* 42 (1924) 200–202.

6 M. Bouyges, *Le 'Kitāb ad-Dīn wa'd-Dawlat' récemment édité, traduit et défendu par Mr A. Mingana est-il authentique? Lettre à Monsieur le Directeur de la John Rylands Library, Manchester, par le Père Maurice Bouyges S.J.*, Beirut, 1924.

7 M. Bouyges, *Le 'Kitāb ad-Dīn wa'd-Dawlat' récemment édité, traduit et défendu par Mr A. Mingana n'est pas authentique. Seconde lettre à Monsieur le Directeur de la John Rylands Library, Manchester, par le Père Maurice Bouyges S.J.*, Beirut, 1925.

8 M. Bouyges, 'Nos informations sur 'Alīy ... aṭ-Ṭabarīy', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 28 (1949–1950) 69–114.

9 M. Bouyges, 'Alīy ibn Rabban aṭ-Ṭabarīy', *Der Islam* 22 (1935) 120–121.

As early as 1888 it had been shown by Martin Schreiner that the great commentator and theologian Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209) had quoted from ‘Alī l-Ṭabarī in his *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*.<sup>10</sup> These were passages containing biblical predictions of Muḥammad which al-Rāzī said he had taken from ‘Ibn Rāzīn al-Ṭabarī’ (continuing the confusion over the element Rabban in ‘Alī’s name). They had obviously come from the *Dīn wa-dawla*, though since the existence of the work had not been announced—that was to come in 1898 with a description in the *Handlist of the Bibliotheca Lindesiana*—Schreiner was understandably unable to identify their source.

Following Peeters and Bouyges’s attacks, a number of scholars came forward to defend the work, but fresh evidence did not appear to prove its age until 1941 when Moshe Perlmann made a link between al-Rāzī’s citations and the *Dīn wa-dawla* itself. Then in 1985, Floris Sepmeijer identified a short series of biblical quotations from the *Dīn wa-dawla* in the fragmentary *Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā* of the tenth century convert to Islam al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb,<sup>11</sup> and in 1986 David Thomas traced links between biblical quotations in the work and Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad al-‘Āmirī’s (d. 992) *Kitāb al-i‘lām bi-manāqib al-Islām*.<sup>12</sup> These provided indicative, if not conclusive, evidence that biblical quotations adduced by ‘Alī were being used by Muslims for the same apologetic purpose in the tenth and later centuries.

Evidence of a more substantial kind has been brought to light only in the last ten years. In 2007, Camilla Adang showed that biblical passages from the *Dīn wa-dawla* were used by the twelfth century Shī‘ī scholar Sadīd al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥimmaṣī al-Rāzī (d. after 1204; according to Shī‘ī sources he was Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s teacher)<sup>13</sup> in his *Kitāb al-munqidh min al-taqlīd*, written in 1185. In fact, al-Ḥimmaṣī took his material from a much earlier work, the lost *Kitāb ghurar al-adilla* of Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 1045).<sup>14</sup> More recently,

10 M. Schreiner, ‘Zur Geschichte der Polemik zwischen Juden und Mohammedanern’, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1888) 591–675.

11 Sepmeijer, *Een weerlegging*, p. 8. The 13 citations he lists there are actually from *Al-naṣiḥa l-īmāniyya fī faḍīḥat al-milla l-Naṣrāniyya* by the twelfth century convert to Islam, Naṣr ibn Yahyā, which Sepmeijer contends incorporates much of al-Ḥasan’s earlier work, which itself is lost in its original form.

12 D. Thomas, ‘Ṭabarī’s *Book of religion and empire*’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 69 (1986) 1–7.

13 Schmidtke, ‘Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī and his transmission of biblical materials’, p. 107.

14 C. Adang, ‘A rare case of biblical “testimonies” to the prophet Muḥammad in Mu‘tazilī literature: Quotations from Ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī’s *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* in Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī’s *Ghurur al-adilla*, as preserved in a work by al-Ḥimmaṣī al-Rāzī’, in C. Adang,

in 2013 Sabine Schmidtke has shown that the thirteenth century Yemeni Zaydī scholar ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zayd ibn Aḥmad al-‘Ansī (d. 1269) independently used Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī’s work, possibly through an intermediary source, in his *Kitāb al-maḥajja l-baydā’ fī uṣūl al-dīn*, and refers there to ‘Alī l-Ṭabarī by name.<sup>15</sup>

Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī was a significant though not well-known figure among Muslim theologians, particularly the Mu‘tazila. He was a student of the important Bahshamī Mu‘tazilī scholar ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī (d. 1025), though he found himself in fundamental disagreement with the Bahshamī school (followers of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī, d. 933) over the accepted proof for the existence of God, and he published his own distinctive theological teachings. He was also a physician, and studied medicine and philosophy with the Christians Abū ‘Alī ibn Samḥ (d. 1027) and Abū l-Faraj ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ṭayyib (d. 1043).

Abū l-Ḥusayn’s main theological work was *Kitāb taṣaffuḥ al-adilla*, a compendium of *kalām* topics in which he set out his own teachings.<sup>16</sup> This drew criticisms while it was being written (it was never finished), and in reply he wrote *Kitāb ghurar al-adilla*, presumably in the latter years of his life towards the mid-tenth century.

This defence is lost, and its structure and full contents remain unknown, though the quotations in al-Ḥimmaṣī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and al-‘Ansī are extensive enough to show that it included responses to criticisms from Jews and probably Christians against the prophetic status of Muḥammad. Al-Ḥimmaṣī and al-‘Ansī both openly acknowledge ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī as their ultimate source and Abū l-Ḥusayn as their immediate source, while Fakhr al-Dīn is more reticent, acknowledging ‘Alī but remaining silent about Abū l-Ḥusayn. Nevertheless, the substantial degree of agreement between Fakhr al-Dīn and al-Ḥimmaṣī in both the vocabulary they use and the structure they follow shows that they must have been using the same source. Mutual dependence between any of the three is ruled out on the grounds that Fakhr al-Dīn and al-‘Ansī each use passages that do not appear in either of the other two scholars.

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S. Schmidtke and D. Sklare (eds), *A common rationality: Mu‘tazilism in Islam and Judaism*, Würzburg, 2007, 297–330.

15 S. Schmidtke, ‘Biblical predictions of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Zaydīs of Yemen (6th/12th and 7th/13th centuries)’, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 293 (2013) 221–240.

16 Some of these teachings, in which he expressed his disagreement with the received views of the Bahshamī Mu‘tazila, were quoted by the thirteenth century Coptic author al-Nushū’ Abū Shākīr ibn al-Rāhib in his *Kitāb al-burhān*, leading some modern scholars to identify wrongly Abū al-Ḥusayn as an otherwise unknown Nestorian Christian who was arguing against Mu‘tazilī doctrine; see *CMR* 2, pp. 665–666.

Taking, then, these three as independent witnesses to Abū l-Ḥusayn's *Ghurār al-adilla*, it appears that the tenth century author used only a small fraction of the passages in the *Dīn wa-dawla*. Al-Ḥimmaṣī, who gives more than either of the other two, quotes fourteen in all, less than a tenth of 'Alī's total. Of these, eight are from Isaiah and the remainder from various other prophets. Fakhr al-Dīn gives no more than eight, including three not given by al-Ḥimmaṣī, and al-'Ansī eleven, including two that the others do not give. This suggests that, unless they were all cutting down the number in Abū l-Ḥusayn or using intermediary sources where this had already been done, the number of quotations they found in their source was already drastically reduced from 'Alī's original work. There was apparently nothing from the Psalms, little from the Minor Prophets and, surprisingly, nothing from Daniel, whose visions were favourites as sources of predictions of the political and religious events that were to occur.

The point remains, however, that this eleventh century Mu'tazilī theologian drew on the *Dīn wa-dawla* for biblical prophecies of Muḥammad and Islam, turning them to his own purpose. Whether he edited 'Alī's work himself or made use of a lost intermediary,<sup>17</sup> his explicit acknowledgement of 'Alī as his source leaves no doubt that the *Dīn wa-dawla* was already in existence and that 'Alī was known as its author.

As though this is not convincing enough evidence, a further material item provides decisive proof that the *Dīn wa-dawla* predates the modern period, when Peeters and Bouyges say it was created. This is a second manuscript copy of the text that has come to light only in the last few years. According to its colophon, it was made in 1754 (1168 A.H.), at least a century before the Manchester John Rylands manuscript was brought to general scholarly attention by Alphonse Mingana. There is every reason to think that it is a slavish copy of the John Rylands manuscript itself, which means that this manuscript would pre-date it. The existence of the later copy, of which neither Mingana nor his critics were aware, adds a final and decisive proof of the antiquity of the work.

17 The four quotations in al-Āmirī, two of which correspond to al-Ḥimmaṣī and Fakhr al-Dīn, may possibly attest to an abbreviated listing made from 'Alī's original before Abū l-Ḥusayn's time.

### The Contents of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*

*Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* is a demonstration and defence of the prophethood of Muḥammad. ‘Alī says that he is directing it against people who deny this, particularly pagan Arabs, Christians and Jews (*mushrikū l-‘Arab wa-ḥamalat al-Kitāb*),<sup>18</sup> though the great majority of its arguments either presuppose the kinds of objections raised by Christians, and to some extent Jews, or assume that the People of the Book will acknowledge their validity. It does not appear to be directed against any particular group or individual, but rather against the followers of Christianity and Judaism in general, who voice the kind of objections he attempts to answer. He gives more detail about this point in his introduction to the work. There, he specifies three objections made by Christians to Muḥammad’s prophethood: that no earlier prophet foretold his coming, that he performed no miracles and gave no prophecies to prove his prophethood, and that no prophet would come after Christ.<sup>19</sup> These were common objections among Christians in the early centuries of Islam, and Muslim *dalā’il al-nubuwwa* works were frequently written to rebut them. In composing the *Dīn wa-dawla* ‘Alī was entering into a heated controversial fray (in which his work, however, proved of little use, because from what can be told it was entirely ignored by Christians).

‘Alī makes clear at both the beginning and the end that he wrote the work during the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861). He thanks the caliph for the guidance he has received from him, and although he does not say in so many words that he has composed the work under the caliph’s direction, he suggests that al-Mutawakkil approves of books such as this and encourages them to be written.<sup>20</sup> This raises the distinct possibility that the work was connected with al-Mutawakkil’s measures against the *dhimmīs*, as Mingana suggests.<sup>21</sup> As recorded by the historian Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, these included the destruction of newly-built churches, the obliteration of graves, the removal of Christian officials from senior public positions, and the imposition of distinctive clothing and of distinguishing marks on houses.<sup>22</sup>

18 See below, pp. 224–231 and also pp. 434–445, where ‘Alī goes into some detail about objections from Christians in particular.

19 See below, pp. 224–225.

20 See below, pp. 204–207.

21 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, pp. viii–ix.

22 Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M. de Goeje et al., *Annales*, Leiden, 1879–1901, part 3, pp. 1389–1390; trans. J.L. Kraemer, *Incipient decline (The history of al-Ṭabarī 34)*, Albany NY, 1989, pp. 89–94.



They were first published in 849–850, soon after the caliph's accession, and they were renewed in 853–854.<sup>23</sup>

There is nothing explicitly stated in the *Dīn wa-dawla* to link it with these oppressive impositions, except 'Alī's reference to al-Mutawakkil's keenness about advocating the superiority of Islam over other religions and about publishing arguments to support this.<sup>24</sup> But the one date that is given in the work does relate it chronologically to al-Mutawakkil's renewal of them. This comes towards the end of the discussion of prophecies from Daniel, where 'Alī says that 'from Christ to this year of ours there have been 867 years'.<sup>25</sup> Mingana adjusts this by explaining that 'Alī may have been 12 years out, making the actual date of writing 855, a mistake that would have resulted from his acceptance that dates in general were 12 years more than they really were (it was thought that Muḥammad had been born in the year 892 of the Seleucid era, the calendar used by Eastern Christians at this time, added to which was a discrepancy of two years between the Eastern and Western calendars).<sup>26</sup>

If 855 is taken as the year in which 'Alī completed the *Dīn wa-dawla*, this would place it about five years after the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, and make it a composition of 'Alī's old age. There are some indications that it may not have been completely finished.

The most glaring of these is a reference towards the beginning to a part of the work that does not seem to have been realised: 'Concerning what pertains to the Jews and others beside them, in the fourth part I have set out teaching about it briefly but without omission.'<sup>27</sup> There is no fourth part in any formal sense, nor any part in which the Jews or Judaism are refuted in detail or at length. There are passing references to the Jews, and towards the end there is a short paragraph describing Jewish beliefs among those of a number of other faiths,<sup>28</sup> but there is no more than this in the work as it has come down. The puzzlement is compounded by a remark in the conclusion where 'Alī says that in this book 'the error and pointlessness of Judaism and the infamies and errors of dualism and fatalism have been fully set out'.<sup>29</sup> This also appears to point to a full account of Judaism. The inevitable conclusion must be that unless a

23 Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, p. 1419; trans. Kraemer, *Incipient decline*, p. 128.

24 See below, pp. 206–207.

25 See below, pp. 422–423.

26 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 138, n. 1.

27 See below, pp. 218–219.

28 See below, pp. 466–467.

29 See below, pp. 472–473.

whole section of the *Dīn wa-dawla* has dropped out leaving no trace of where it originally stood, 'Alī's plan was not realised in full.

This conclusion is confirmed by another statement of intention made just before this, where 'Alī says that he will show how Christian doctrines diverge from Christian scripture, describe the beliefs of the main denominations and adduce 130 arguments from the prophetic books, together with arguments of other kinds.<sup>30</sup> This is realised in part, though there is nothing substantial on inconsistencies between Christian scripture and doctrine or on the Christian denominations.

Other incidental discrepancies are pointed out by Mingana, mainly sentences that appear to be out of place,<sup>31</sup> while a third major awkwardness is the distribution of sections within the work. As it has come down, it consists of an introduction and ten chapters. Nine of these are taken up with discussions about the merits and actions of Muḥammad and his successors, while the tenth comprises 16 sections on biblical prophecies and related topics and occupies about a half of the whole book. Surely something is not right here. It is understandable that in a first draft an author could find a whole series of topics accumulating into a single unit so that it becomes disproportionately long, as here. But then in successive drafts he will try to reshape the structure to remove the lack of balance. This has not happened in the *Dīn wa-dawla*.

It is possible that over time the work underwent forms of editing that produced the anomalies present in the one extant manuscript and its close copy—the later works that draw on it all use texts from the tenth chapter alone, and thus offer no guidance. But it is equally possible that, as Mingana suggests,<sup>32</sup> the work as it is now known is a transcript from a first draft that was still in a relatively rough form.

If this is so, mentions of otherwise unknown individuals, such as a certain al-Fākhir, who wrote a work in which he compared the Arabian tribes of Qaḥṭān and 'Adnān,<sup>33</sup> the 'rude, vicious, ignorant Jarmaḳānī',<sup>34</sup> a Christian who held a contrary view about Abraham's son Ishmael, and Marcus the translator, who appears without introduction as the author of three interpretations of passages from the Old Testament,<sup>35</sup> can be explained as aides-memoire that 'Alī intended to explain more fully later. It is possible that he never did this because

30 See below, pp. 218–219.

31 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. xvii and footnotes.

32 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. xvii.

33 See below, pp. 220–221.

34 See below, pp. 332–333.

35 See below, pp. 326–327, 354–355, 360–361.

he did not survive long enough. The work was certainly passed down to enable scholars such as the Mu‘tazilī Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī and the convert Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā (and possibly al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb) to make use of its repertory of biblical verses. But it may not have come to public attention in anything approaching a final, polished form.

As it stands, *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* can be divided into four main sections (though these are not marked). The first comprises the introductory matter, which is a form of theoretical discussion about the criteria for judging the reliability of accounts that have come down from earlier times. After describing the circumstances in which he wrote the book (namely his desire to show that earlier prophets foretold Muḥammad, even though the People of the Book repudiate this), the unsatisfactory nature of earlier attempts of this kind, and the active encouragement of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil to write, he briefly explains the procedure he will follow. This is to prove that the reports about Muḥammad that are accepted by Muslims are reliable on the same grounds as the reports about other prophets that are accepted by the People of the Book.<sup>36</sup> Thus, his intention is to demonstrate that Muḥammad fulfils all the qualifications for prophethood, just like the prophets of the Bible, and must therefore be acknowledged in the same way as them.

‘Alī follows this with what must be regarded as a rather pedestrian account of the different forms of report: those that are universally true, those that are false, those that are true among certain groups of people, and those that appear convincing but only because they play upon the emotions or trick the senses. Then he moves on to ways of discriminating between reports, which is to test them according to what is rational and civilised. Thus, the obscene practices of the Zoroastrians, the self-contradictory beliefs of the Christians, and the activities of pre-Islamic Arabian tribes—all these are self-evidently wrong. On the other hand, ten characteristics of Muḥammad compiled from ‘the testimonies of truth and measurements of consequence’ (*shahādāt al-ḥaqq wa-maqāyīs al-‘ibar*), attest to unimpeachable qualities in him that are comparable only with those of Christ and compel acknowledgement of him as a prophet.<sup>37</sup>

The introduction is concluded with one of the most revealing passages in the book. Here, ‘Alī enquires into the reasons why Christians in particular refuse to accept Muḥammad, and itemises three: no earlier prophets foretold him; there is no mention in the Qur’ān of any miracle or prophecy by him; there were to

36 See below, pp. 200–207.

37 See below, pp. 208–225.

be no prophets after Christ.<sup>38</sup> It can be seen from the remainder of the *Dīn wa-dawla* that ‘Alī takes each of these with considerable seriousness and replies to them in detail. In fact, they can be understood as the immediate reasons for the book—possibly lurking in ‘Alī’s mind from past times—and for his decision to write it.

He ends the introduction with some immediate responses to these three objections, such as that some prophets accepted by Christians were themselves not foretold and others did not perform miracles, while prophets after Christ are actually referred to in the New Testament.<sup>39</sup> Here he shows concisely that Christians can have no legitimate objections to Muḥammad because everything they say is contradicted by their own scriptures. They express their usual flawed views that can be silenced by a few apposite arguments drawn from their own sources. But the rest of the *Dīn wa-dawla* is intended as a considered, maybe final, response to these superficial but persistent objections.

The second of the four main sections into which the *Dīn wa-dawla* can be divided comprises chapters 1–8. Chapters 1–7 are all concerned with Muḥammad himself, and are clearly aimed against objections that he did not perform miracles or make any prophecies.

Chapter 1 comprises quotations from the Qur’ān to show that Muḥammad’s message was the same as that of Abraham and other prophets, of a God who is one, omnipotent and just. This is followed in chapter 2 by further Qur’ān quotations and stories about Muḥammad to show the moral excellence of his teachings and of the regulations he delivered to the Muslim community. The point of these is to make clear that he stands in the line of Abraham and other prophets, and that he gave doctrinal and ethical teachings that bear serious comparison with theirs, marking out Islam as a comprehensive religious system. In addition, stories about Muḥammad’s own simplicity of life leave no doubt that he embodied these teachings in himself—they ‘show that the one who delivered them was rightly directed, infallible, modest, submissive, not a borrower, a usurper or a joker about frivolous things’.<sup>40</sup>

Chapter 3 comprises a long series of accounts of miracles performed by Muḥammad, from the Night Journey and other well-known events, such as throwing dust to cause confusion among the Meccans at the Battle of Badr, causing water to flow from between his fingers, causing trees to move to cover his modesty, and hearing the poisoned lamb joint warn him not to eat it, to

38 See below, pp. 224–225.

39 See below, pp. 224–231.

40 See below, pp. 246–247.

less well-known miracles, including a wolf announcing that he had appeared in Mecca to a man whose descendants 'Alī says he knew about in his own time.<sup>41</sup>

Chapters 4 and 5 recount prophecies of Muḥammad that were realised in his own time and after his death. Then, in chapter 6 'Alī compares the Qur'ān with the Torah, Gospel, Psalms and some of the prophetic books to show it surpasses them in containing everything that they each contain in part: 'it has had no equal since the beginning of creation and writing on the page'.<sup>42</sup> 'Alī also defends Muḥammad's illiteracy as something uniquely endowed on him by God, just as he gave other unique characteristics to other prophets. Far from being a deficiency, this is a further proof that the Qur'ān is a miracle, surpassing in eloquence the highest achievements of learned authors. Chapter 7 completes this group of proofs about Muḥammad's person by arguing that his victories were signs of God's assistance, and that they were given by God and not Satan because they were given to a man who condemned Satan.

Chapter 8 continues the thought of this group by showing how the men who succeeded Muḥammad as leaders of the Muslim community shared his characteristics of simplicity of life. 'Alī gives anecdotal examples from the lives of Abū Bakr, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (there is no mention here of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, possibly because 'Alī had not yet found suitable examples, or maybe thought it expedient in a work written for an 'Abbasid caliph to refrain from praising too excessively the ancestor of the Umayyads), followed by 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, the one Umayyad caliph generally thought pious in his ways, and finally 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar.<sup>43</sup> The examples given from the lives of these Muslims demonstrate how the teachings and model of Muḥammad exerted influence on his followers, by implication setting up a comparison with Jesus and his disciples.

So far in the *Dīn wa-dawla* 'Alī has established that reports that are accepted within the Muslim community (he would say, that have multiple attestation) and that have the ring of conviction should be considered reliable, and that actual reports about Muḥammad and his leading successors and followers demonstrate beyond doubt his qualities as the bringer of teachings of unsurpassed superiority that were also delivered by earlier prophets, his ability to perform miracles and predict the unseen, and the ascetic qualities of himself and those around him. 'Alī has thus (at least in his own terms) gone some

41 See below, pp. 254–255.

42 See below, pp. 288–289.

43 See below, pp. 302–319.

distance in meeting the main objections made by the Christians, that Muḥammad possessed the qualities and stature of being a prophet in his person and demeanour.

The next two chapters, 9 and 10, address another of the Christian objections, that no earlier prophets foretold Muḥammad, and they do so in spectacular fashion. It was for the biblical predictions alone that the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* was remembered in later times, and that caused it to be incorporated as a foundation element in later Muslim apologetic and polemical structures.

In Chapter 9 ‘Alī presents a series of prophecies from Genesis about Ishmael that he suggests are incomplete and essentially incomprehensible unless they are interpreted as references to Islam. To ‘Alī himself their intention is obvious, and he evidently presents them here as his strongest case for biblical support of Islam.

A good part of the chapter is taken up with a disagreement between ‘Alī and an opponent whom he calls ‘this rude Jarmaḳānī’,<sup>44</sup> but does not otherwise identify. This presumably Christian individual had evidently heard of the links made between the references in Genesis and Islam and had denied them, raising the possibility that ‘Alī had published the substance of this part before in some form, written or oral—though there is no sign of it in the extant parts of the *Radd*—and had met with opposition (it is more likely, though not entirely certain, that this Christian was someone known personally to ‘Alī than an earlier individual whose objections ‘Alī was picking up).

In Chapter 10, which is by far the longest in the book, ‘Alī gives a systematic series of lists of prophecies from ten Old Testament prophetic books and from the New Testament, including the references to the Paraclete in the Gospel of John and a citation from Paul, whom ‘Alī evidently does not associate with any wrongdoing concerning Christian doctrine or scripture. These show considerable ingenuity in both choice and interpretation, the latter of which must be ‘Alī’s own in the main. The most striking feature of the chapter is the way in which ‘Alī shows complete indifference to earlier Jewish and Christian interpretations of his chosen passages and often to the verbal integrity of the texts themselves. When, for example, he sees a derivative of the trilateral root *ḥ.m.d.* he interprets the verse to refer to Muḥammad because of verbal affinity, even when the meaning violates the structure of the passage itself. The fact that this series of texts and interpretations attracted no known Christian responses, and that it attracted little use from Muslims, with the main exception of the Mu‘tazilī Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī and later borrowers from his *Ghurar al-adilla*,

44 See below, pp. 336–337. For the meaning of Jarmaḳānī, see below p. 333, n. 209.

suggests that it did not command confidence among Muslims in general, and was not thought worthy of much attention by Christians.

The fourth section of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*, which is part of Chapter 10 as the work stands, comprises four answers to specific objections raised by Christians. The first is one 'Alī remembers from his uncle Abū Zakkār Yaḥyā ibn Nu'mān, that he had found persuasive when he was still a Christian. It is that the first Muslims converted without witnessing any miraculous sign, meaning that the religion they were entering was not validated by God. 'Alī's reply is that many other prophets, as well as Christ himself, did not produce signs when they were asked to or when they were in difficulties.<sup>45</sup>

The second objection is that the rites and regulations of Islam are wrong, evidently in the sense that they contravene the teachings of other existing religions. Following the same methods as in the previous reply, 'Alī presents a long series of comparisons between key Islamic teachings and those from earlier prophets to show that Islam is not dramatically different in this respect from what preceded it.<sup>46</sup>

The third objection is that Muḥammad changed the injunctions given by Moses and Jesus. In reply, 'Alī compares teachings of the three prophets to show their similarities, and goes on to show how Jesus changed Moses's teachings, again following the same method as before.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, the fourth objection is that no one other than Christ talked about the resurrection. 'Alī quickly refutes this in the same way as the others, by citing other prophets' teachings about God raising the dead.<sup>48</sup> It is not easy to see what the actual objection is here. Either the Christian opponents who are supposed to have made it were ignorant of the copious teachings in the Qur'ān about the general resurrection, as well as of the biblical references to other prophets that 'Alī supplies, or there is some misunderstanding over the nature of the objection. A possibility is that at the root of the difference lay the Christian criticism that the Qur'ān did not refer to the resurrection of Christ because it denied his crucifixion, and thereby could not give a guarantee of the general resurrection. But this would have become clouded somewhat, possibly through a deliberate desire on 'Alī's part to avoid discussing a problem for which there was no easy answer of the kind he had found for the other objections.

While these four objections and answers do not fit neatly into the structure of chapter 10 (and could have been something of an afterthought), their

45 See below, pp. 434–445.

46 See below, pp. 444–455.

47 See below, pp. 454–459.

48 See below, pp. 458–465.

presence serves the overall purpose of the *Dīn wa-dawla* well. For they show that Muḥammad and his teachings are equivalent to earlier prophets and their utterances, and that Christians are inconsistent in trying to draw distinctions between him and others. They also convey something of the polemical heat that could be generated in debates, as one side made claims that left them exposed to the easy answers that anyone with 'Alī's knowledge of scripture could find. They even betray an element of impatient dismissiveness felt by theologians such as 'Alī's uncle towards this new religion that led them to underestimate its potency.

'Alī concludes the work with an argument that was also used by others. This is to introduce an impartial stranger 'from as far away as India or China', who judges between the religions.<sup>49</sup> 'Alī briefly summarises the main elements of each religion, with Islam last, and leaves it to the fair-minded reader to decide.

Overall, then, *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* is a detailed defence of the prophetic status of Muḥammad, based both on internal Islamic arguments, that the teachings of the faith command acceptance and the person of Muḥammad commands respect and some awe, and also on external biblical arguments, that there are numerous predictions of him in the prophets and other books of the Bible, and that he stands comparison with the prophetic figures themselves. The implication is that anyone who is not impossibly prejudiced would appreciate the merits of Islam and see that earlier faiths were anticipating it. It is therefore rational to convert and become a Muslim.

For these reasons, the work is best taken primarily as a personal statement about 'Alī's own passage from Christianity to Islam, even while it is a contribution to the public debate about the credentials of Muḥammad as a figure of virtue and a prophet. The fact that so few of its wide range of arguments were taken up maybe reveals that what for 'Alī himself were cogent points in favour of his new faith were for others either incomprehensible or indecisive.

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49 Pp. 464–469. See S. Griffith, 'Faith and reason in Christian kalām: Theodore Abū Qurrah on discerning the true religion', in S.K. Samir and J. Nielsen (eds), *Christian Arabic apologetics during the Abbasid period (750–1258)*, Leiden, 1994, 1–43, pp. 33–35, for an account of the Melkite bishop Theodore Abū Qurra (d. after c. 816) in his *Maymar fi wujūd al-Khāliq wa-l-dīn al-qawīm* using the figure of a remote mountain dweller who comes down to the city and encounters the nine main religions of the day and decides between them from his impartial position; and D. Thomas (ed.), *Anti-Christian polemic in early Islam, Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's 'Against the Trinity'*, Cambridge, 1992, p. 25, for the suggestion that Abū 'Īsā's lost work entitled *Al-gharīb al-mashriqī* featured the figures of Brahmins who voiced criticisms of Islam, presumably from an objective standpoint.



### The Sources of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*

‘Alī does not acknowledge any sources for the arguments he brings together in the work, and gives the strong impression that he has discovered the material himself and used it in his own original way. There are, however, some signs of pre-existing works present, suggesting that he is less individual and innovative than he first appears to be.

The most likely sources, or maybe models, are the earlier works that ‘Alī mentions disparagingly at the beginning of the *Dīn wa-dawla*: ‘Some of [their authors] have abbreviated, curtailed and compacted their evidence, and have not given an explanation. Others have argued against the People of the Book in verse, and with things they do not recognise from their books. And others have packed within the covers of their books addresses to Muslims and not associators, and have then transmitted their evidence in the most rugged discourse and set it far from comprehending’.<sup>50</sup>

Here he intimates that some earlier apologists may have attempted to refer to the Bible, but without convincing Christians or Jews that the texts they adduced were part of their scripture, and he suggests that others failed in their purpose because their arguments were based on evidence that only Muslims, but not Jews or Christians, would accept, presumably verses from the Qur’ān and stories from uncertain sources. He may also indirectly identify one of them (though this is only a circumstantial connection), because it is known from Ibn al-Nadīm that the founder of the Baghdad school of the Mu‘tazila, Bishr ibn al-Mu‘tamir (d. 825), wrote a book entitled simply *Kitāb al-ḥujja fī ithbāt al-nabī*, which was in verse.<sup>51</sup>

An example of an author who ‘abbreviated, curtailed and compacted’ his arguments is Abū al-Rabī‘ Muḥammad ibn al-Layth, who wrote a letter on behalf of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VI in about 796.<sup>52</sup> Given that a copy could have been made available to someone who was composing his work under the aegis of one of al-Rashīd’s successors no more than 50 years later, it is not outside the realm of possibility that ‘Alī actually had this work in mind when he was writing. In structure it bears an uncanny resemblance to parts of the *Dīn wa-dawla*, including sections on Muḥammad’s actions as confirmation of his prophethood, his knowledge of future and past events, his miracles, the success of his mission, and predictions

<sup>50</sup> Below, pp. 202–205.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 185.

<sup>52</sup> *Risālat Abī l-Rabī‘ Muḥammad ibn al-Layth*, ed. and French trans. Hadi Eid, *Lettre du calife Hārūn al-Rašīd à l’empereur Constantin VI*, Paris, 1992.

in the Bible, all topics that ‘Alī discusses at length. However, comparison of the contents of these sections in the two works shows almost nothing in common, and in the few instances where they do share, the earlier apologist is often so brief that his argument must have been virtually incomprehensible to someone who did not already know what he was saying. For example, when he comes to the miracles of Muḥammad, Ibn al-Layth lists them simply as follows: a tree that he called and it came near and it returned when he commanded it, a camel that complained, and a wolf that spoke,<sup>53</sup> without any details about what happened or how these might have been miracles. This is the kind of compression that could have occasioned ‘Alī’s remark, and spurred him to give fuller and more transparent explanations in his own work.<sup>54</sup>

Evidently, none of the works ‘Alī saw had achieved the clarity of expression or credibility of argument that in his view would convince its intended audience. But they could still have furnished useful material for his own apology—possibly elements from Muḥammad’s biography, in the main—that could be incorporated as long as their historical reliability was defended more rigorously. While it is impossible to say whether ‘Alī used anything from these works that he says are unsatisfactory, it stands to reason that he may have recognised something in at least some of them as worth salvaging.

Another source, if it can be regarded as that, is the thought of ‘Alī’s uncle, whom he names as Abū Zakkār Yaḥyā ibn Nu‘mān and claims ‘was one of the scholars of the people and their eloquent experts’ and ‘was famous for debate and skilfulness’.<sup>55</sup> He recalls Abū Zakkār’s influence upon him when he was young, and recounts objections his uncle had raised against Islam, which appeared in a book ‘in refutation of the people of the religions’.<sup>56</sup> These were that the Qur’ān’s literary merits gave no indication of its divine origins and therefore no proof of Muḥammad’s prophethood, for the reason that literary excellence is found among all peoples,<sup>57</sup> and that Muḥammad had not performed any miracle as evidence of his status.<sup>58</sup> They were part of the Christian repertoire of objections that there was no divine guarantee of Muḥammad’s claim to prophethood, either in the Qur’ān or any of his actions. ‘Alī had clearly been persuaded by them at one time, but now he disagreed. Certainly, the last of the four sections of the *Dīn wa-dawla* is an explicit reply to his uncle’s main

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53 Ibn al-Layth, *Risāla*, p. 142 (text)/p. 51 (trans.).

54 See below, pp. 254–255.

55 See below, pp. 282–283 and 434–435.

56 See below, pp. 434–435.

57 See below, pp. 282–283.

58 See below, pp. 434–435.

point, and the rest could also be seen as an attempt to rebut it. If Abū Zakkār's lost work was not a source, it must nevertheless have been a definite stimulus for 'Alī's apology and formative influence upon it.

Reliance upon earlier sources is most evident in Chapters 2–6, on aspects of Muḥammad's character and actions, where many of the stories told to illustrate his virtues can be paralleled in the prophetic biographies of Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Sa'd and the historian Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī, and in major Ḥadīth collections,<sup>59</sup> though, as Alphonse Mingana points out, there is no sufficient verbal correspondence between the *Dīn wa-dawla* and any of them to indicate direct dependence.<sup>60</sup> It would appear that these traditions were gleaned independently by 'Alī and other Muslim scholars of this period from earlier sources, where they appeared in forms that the authors whose works are extant adopted for their own individual purposes. A comparison of the first few anecdotes about the miracles attributed to Muḥammad as they appear in the *Dīn wa-dawla* and in Ibn Ishāq's *Sīra* and Ibn Sa'd's *Al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* illustrates this.

The first is Muḥammad's miracle of replacing the broken sword of 'Ukkāsha ibn Miḥṣan. Ibn Ishāq recounts it as follows:

'Ukkāsha ibn Miḥṣan ibn Ḥurthān al-Asadī, ally of Banu 'Abd Shams, fought at Badr until his sword was broken (*inqaṭa'a*) in his hand. He came to the apostle who gave him a wooden cudgel (*jidhlan min ḥaṭab*) telling him to fight with that. When he took it he brandished it and it became in his hand a long, strong, gleaming sword, and he fought with it until God gave victory to the Muslims. The sword was called al-'Awn and he had it with him in all the battles he fought with the apostle until finally he was killed in the rebellion, still holding it.<sup>61</sup>

Ibn Sa'd tells the story very briefly:

'Ukkāsha ibn Miḥṣan's sword was broken (*inqaṭa'a*) on the day of Badr, so the Messenger of God gave him a stem from a tree (*jidhlan min shajara*). In his hand this again became a sharp sword of pure steel, strong in power.<sup>62</sup>

59 See the notes to Mingana, *Religion and empire*, pp. 31–72.

60 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. xviii.

61 Ibn Hishām, *Al-sīrat al-nabawīyya*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen, vol. 1, 1858, p. 452; trans. A. Guillaume, *The life of Muhammad*, Karachi, 1978, p. 305.

62 Ibn Sa'd, *Al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. E. Sachau, Leiden, 1905–1917, vol. 1, part 1, p. 125.

By contrast, 'Alī's version is detailed and dramatic:

'Ukkāsha ibn Miḥṣan's sword was shattered (*inkasara*) on the day of Badr, and he said, 'Messenger of God, my sword is shattered.' So he (peace be upon him) took a piece of firewood<sup>63</sup> (*jidhlan min ḥaṭab*) and gave it to him, saying, 'Shake it', so 'Ukkāsha shook it and it became a sword. He went forward wielding it, and after this it never left him.<sup>64</sup>

There is evident correspondence between the three accounts, and it might be thought that 'Alī's version is based on one of the others. But the variation in significant items of vocabulary, and particularly the absence from 'Alī's version of the vivid description of the new sword that is given by Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Sa'd tends to negate this.

Other shared accounts show the same basic common features and significant differences in detail, for example the story of the calf calling out as it is being prepared for slaughter by the Banū Ghifār. According to Ibn Sa'd, it bellows out the following: *Amr najīh! Šā'ih yaṣīhu bi-lisān faṣīh bi-Makka*;<sup>65</sup> while according to 'Alī, the words are: *Amr najīh! Šā'ih yaṣīhu bi-Makka*, 'A propitious event! Someone is crying out in Mecca',<sup>66</sup> omitting the doctrinally important phrase 'in an eloquent tongue' and lacking the rounded fullness of the *saj'* in the longer version. If 'Alī had been copying from Ibn Sa'd it is unlikely that he would have left out any part (unless the phrase has dropped out in the transmission of his text).

Other instances resemble these, suggesting that 'Alī and other authors of the time were independently making use of what must have been a common stock of stories about Muḥammad that may well have circulated outside any fixed contextual frameworks. This is supported by the fact that al-Bukhārī sets the story of the calf bellowing out in an account by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb of a man sacrificing a calf to an idol, and a harsher voice than 'Umar had ever heard breathing out the words to the man making the sacrifice: *Yā jalīh, amr najīh! Rajul faṣīh yaqūlu: Lā ilāha illā anta* ('Eh you brash rogue, a propitious event! An eloquent man says "There is no god but You").<sup>67</sup> Here the important words have been altered drastically in order to make their purpose explicit, and

63 This translation is closer to the original than Guillaume's 'wooden cudgel'.

64 Below, pp. 252–253.

65 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1, part 1, pp. 102–103.

66 Below, pp. 254–255.

67 *Šaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/63/92>.

despite the emphasis on the harshness of the voice, the rasping alliteration that can be appreciated in Ibn Sa'd's version is largely lost.

It therefore seems likely that 'Alī would have taken these and his other examples about Muḥammad from sources he discovered for himself, possibly some of the earlier *dalā'il* works he disparaged at the beginning of his own, possibly isolated prophetic traditions (it is surprising how often the wording of his versions of Ḥadīths agree with the canonical collections, which would have been in the process of compilation at about the time he was writing the *Dīn wa-dawla*). Whatever these were, his construction of them into a hagiographical account of Muḥammad is one of the earliest that survive, and there is every indication that it is his own.

The other place in the *Dīn wa-dawla* where 'Alī could have used pre-existing written sources is in his long and elaborate analysis in Chapters 9 and 10 of biblical verses that refer to Muḥammad and Islam. He gives no indication whatsoever of any borrowing here, and in such references as the comparisons he has made between the translations of some verses by a certain Marcus and the Septuagint and Hebrew originals to a reading in the Syriac text,<sup>68</sup> to his own numerical interpretation of a prophecy in Daniel which gives him a convincing dating,<sup>69</sup> and to the numerological significance of 'Paraclete' in John's Gospel,<sup>70</sup> he strongly implies that he himself has brought together the interpretations of the passages, and therefore the passages themselves. However, matters may not be as simple as this.

Some years ago, Camilla Adang made a comparison between 29 biblical passages common to 'Alī's *Dīn wa-dawla* and his younger contemporary Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh ibn Qutayba's (828–889) *A'lām* (also known as *Dalā'il al-nubuwwa*).<sup>71</sup> She observes that while many of the verses cited by Ibn Qutayba follow the versions given by 'Alī *verbatim* or very closely, some differ in wording and others do not correspond at all, leading her to conclude that Ibn Qutayba was using another source, either in addition to 'Alī or instead of him. If the latter, 'Alī could have used this source as well.

Support for this discovery is given by Sabine Schmidtke, who examines 17 biblical passages quoted in chapter 3 of *Kitāb ithbāt nubuwwat al-nabī* of the Zaydī Imām Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Hārūn al-Buṭḥānī, al-Mu'ayyad bi-Llāh (944–1020), a student of the Mu'tazilī 'Abd al-Jabbār

68 Below, pp. 326–327, 354–355, 360–361.

69 Below, pp. 420–423.

70 Below, pp. 424–427.

71 C. Adang, *Muslim writers on Judaism & the Hebrew Bible, from Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, Leiden, 1996, pp. 148–150, and also Appendix Two, pp. 264–266.

(d. 1025).<sup>72</sup> These passages correspond in part to those given by ‘Alī and in part to those given by Ibn Qutayba, although some are not present in either author, pointing to the existence of an independent source, and strengthening the case for one or more early sources on which ‘Alī and Ibn Qutayba could each separately have drawn.

An example will help illustrate the complexity in these relationships. When he cites Psalm 149 (which became a favourite proof text among later Muslim polemicists), ‘Alī cites only verses 4–9 and omits verses 1–3 completely (possibly the references to Israel and Zion in verse 2 are too explicit to be interpreted away). Ibn Qutayba, however, quotes verses 1–2 and 4–8,<sup>73</sup> and in the overlapping passage there are only a few correspondences: thus, in ‘Alī’s translation verse 4 reads ‘For the Lord is pleased with his people, and has bestowed salvation on the poor’ (*min ajli anna l-Rabb irtāḥa li-sha’bihi wa-taṭawwala ‘alā l-masākīn bi-l-khalāṣ*),<sup>74</sup> while Ibn Qutayba’s reads ‘Because God has chosen to himself his community and given it victory, and strengthened the pious among them with honour’ (*min ajli anna Llāh iṣṭafā lahu ummatahu wa-a’ṭāhu l-naṣr wa-shaddada l-ṣāliḥīn minhum bi-l-karāma*)<sup>75</sup> Clearly, there is no sign of dependence.<sup>76</sup>

Against this, in their translations of other verses either ‘Alī and Ibn Qutayba are in full agreement or it is easy to see why, on grounds of doctrine or style, one differs from the other. For example, ‘Alī quotes Deuteronomy 18:18 as ‘I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers’ (*innī muqīm lahum nabīyyan mithlaka min bayn ikhwatihim*),<sup>77</sup> and Ibn Qutayba as ‘I will raise up for the People of Israel a prophet from among their brothers like you and I will place my word in his mouth’ (*innī uqīmu li-Banī Isrā’īl nabbiyyan min*

72 S. Schmidtke, ‘Biblical predictions of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Zaydīs of Iran’, *Arabica* 59 (2012) 218–266.

73 Adang, *Muslim writers*, p. 271 (a translation of the quotation of Ibn Qutayba’s *A’lām* in Ibn al-Jawzī, *Al-wafā’ bi-ahwāl al-muṣṭafā*, ed. C. Brockelmann, ‘Ibn Ġauzī’s Kitāb fi faḍā’il al-Muṣṭafā nach der Leidener Handschrift untersucht’, in F. Delitzsche and P. Haupt (eds), *Beiträge zur Assyriologie und semitischen Sprachwissenschaft III*, Leipzig, 1898, 2–59). An edition of the relevant parts of the *A’lām*, based on a manuscript recently discovered in Dār al-kutub al-ḡāhiriyya, Damascus, can be found in S. Schmidtke, ‘The Muslim reception of biblical materials. Ibn Qutayba and his *A’lām al-nubuwwa*’, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22 (2011) 249–274. The text of this Psalm is on p. 255.

74 Below, pp. 348–349.

75 Schmidtke, ‘The Muslim reception of biblical materials’, p. 255.

76 The quotation of this Psalm given by Ibn al-Layth, *Risāla*, p. 57 (text), agrees almost completely with Ibn Qutayba.

77 Below, pp. 340–341.

*ikhwatihim mithlaka wa-aj'alu kalāmī 'alā famihi*).<sup>78</sup> This might suggest that Ibn Qutayba is using 'Alī directly, and just changing the unspecific 'for them' in 'Alī's version (which accurately reflects the biblical text) to 'for the People of Israel' in the interests of clarity. However, Ibn Qutayba's more accurate continuation, 'I will place my word in his mouth', against which 'Alī has 'and whichever man does not hear my words which this man will relay in my name, I will avenge myself upon him', excludes this. Assuming that the texts of the two works have not been altered by copyists, the conclusion to which this comparison points is that in at least some of their biblical quotations neither could have been directly using the other but that they were using different translations. In many places these translations agreed with each other or were very close, but in others they did not correspond.<sup>79</sup>

The situation is further complicated by the form of the proof-texts that appear in al-Mu'ayyad bi-Llāh's *Kitāb ithbāt nubuwwat al-nabī*, which must have appeared about 150 years after 'Alī al-Ṭabarī's *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*. As Sabine Schmidtke shows, in chapter 3 of this work the Imām advances 17 quotations from the Bible, most of which agree with Ibn Qutayba though a few with 'Alī.<sup>80</sup> Her conclusion is that the comparatively few instances of agreement with 'Alī make it unlikely that al-Mu'ayyad was using the *Dīn wa-dawla* directly, while additions in the passages that parallel Ibn Qutayba's *A'lām* make it equally unlikely he was using that work directly. 'This suggests that al-Mu'ayyad was drawing on source(s)/translation traditions preceding or parallel to that of ['Alī] ibn Rabbān's *al-Dīn wa-l-dawla* and Ibn Qutayba's *A'lām*.'<sup>81</sup>

Lists of proof-texts certainly existed before the beginning of the 9th century. One instance is the series of 11 passages given by Ibn al-Layth in his *Risāla*, which comprises verses from the Old Testament and the Gospel of John.<sup>82</sup> Some of these correspond closely in wording to Ibn Qutayba, though none of them is close to 'Alī.

78 Schmidtke, 'The Muslim reception of biblical materials', p. 254. Cf. Ibn al-Layth, *Risāla*, p. 58.

79 R. Vollandt, *Arabic versions of the Pentateuch. A comparative study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim sources*, Leiden, 2015, pp. 95–96, sees this relationship as one of direct dependence of Ibn Qutayba on the *Dīn wa-dawla* and also Ibn al-Layth's *Risāla*. But this is not supported by the evidence.

80 Schmidtke, 'Biblical predictions of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Zaydis of Iran', pp. 221–230.

81 Schmidtke, 'Biblical predictions of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Zaydis of Iran', p. 230.

82 Adang, *Muslim writers*, p. 148.

All this evidence, gathered from works written over a period of two hundred years, points to the conclusion that, as far as can be known, for a relatively small number of his biblical passages 'Alī was making use of a source of proof texts that was also known to Ibn Qutayba and al-Mu'ayyad li-Llāh. However, it is important to note that these shared texts make up a comparatively small number of all the verses in chapters 9 and 10 of the *Dīn wa-dawla*. 'Alī clearly went far beyond lists that had been compiled by any known earlier apologists, and showed the same independence of mind (or indifference to others) in his approach to the Bible as in his use of the sources of Muḥammad's biography.

This independence of mind is also exemplified in the way 'Alī treats the translations or interpretations of particular verses of the Bible he quotes from a certain Marcus. The first mention of this figure comes in 'Alī's comment on Genesis 17:20, in which God promises Abraham that he will bless his son Ishmael: 'He will beget twelve mighty beings, and God will make him a mighty nation.' 'Alī explains that the translation (*tarjama*) he has given here is that of *Mārqūs al-turjumān*, and he compares it with the Septuagint where he notes the variant: 'He will beget twelve nations'.<sup>83</sup> 'Alī refers to him a second time in a comment on Isaiah 9:16, 'A child is born to us, a son is given to us. His dominion is on his shoulder' (*ṣultānuhu 'alā katfihi*). He comments that this is the version given in the Syriac, 'which Marcus has interpreted' (*allatī fassarahā Mārqūs*), though in the Hebrew the verse reads 'On his shoulder is the sign of prophethood'.<sup>84</sup> The third and final mention comes in relation to Isaiah 24:16–18, which begins 'We have heard from the ends of the earth psalming and chanting to the godly and good'. 'Alī again comments that this is in the interpretation of Marcus (*fī tafsīr Mārqūs*), though in the original Hebrew the verse reads 'We have heard from the ends of the earth the strain "Muḥammad" (*ṣawt Muḥammad*)'.<sup>85</sup> In all three instances 'Alī shows that he does not accept the meaning given by Marcus, but questions its reliability, or its suitability for his own apologetic purposes.

These three references do not make clear what form the translation or interpretation given by Marcus actually took, and it has been questioned whether he had made a translation into Syriac<sup>86</sup> or into Arabic.<sup>87</sup> Ronny Vollandt offers

83 Below, pp. 326–327.

84 Below, pp. 354–355.

85 Below, pp. 360–361.

86 T. Nöldeke, [review] 'Alī Tabari, *The Book of Religion and Empire*, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 45 (1924) cols 22–28, col. 23.

87 D.S. Margoliouth, 'On "The Book of Religion and Empire" by 'Alī b. Rabban al-Tabari', *Pro-*



the attractive alternative suggestion that rather than serving as a translator of the text as a whole, Marcus actually fulfilled the function within the Christian community of providing 'the authoritative translation to the congregation in liturgical or educational settings', so that as a younger man 'Alī could have studied the Bible under his professional oversight.<sup>88</sup> Of course, as a native Syriac speaker, he would not have needed Marcus's Arabic translations, but he must have known them. If this was the case, Marcus could be called both 'translator' and 'interpreter', because he would have given explanations of the sacred text in order to assist Christians whose language abilities were not equal to understanding it for themselves or to help young Christians to appreciate it. If this is what had happened, in these instances where 'Alī disagrees with Marcus he would be recalling and rejecting opinions he had been given while he was still a Christian and disputing with biblical interpretations he had once taken as authoritative. This parallels the way in which in the *Radd* he disputes Theodore of Mopsuestia's explanation of the incongruity of John the Baptist sending his disciples to ask who Jesus was even though he had witnessed the heavenly voice declaring Jesus Son of God at his baptism.

This raises the question of the actual version of the Bible 'Alī knew. Ronny Vollandt shows that the quotations from the Pentateuch in the *Dīn wa-dawla* bear close resemblance to an East Syriac translation that was made sometime in the ninth century and 'became the preferred translation of the Peshiṭta Pentateuch' among Arabic-speaking Christian communities as far away as Egypt and Spain. It is known as Arab<sup>Syr2</sup>, and its earliest witness is MS Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, Ar. 4, which was copied in 963, a century after 'Alī's death.<sup>89</sup> Similarities between this translation and the *Dīn wa-dawla* are most noticeable in shared chapter divisions, which differ considerably from other ecclesiastical traditions, and in a series of translated passages that are more or less identical in wording. However, there are also numerous variants. These may represent the text of the translation at an earlier stage in its development, before it was written in the form in which it is known in the tenth century, though they also 'probably reflect 'Alī ibn Rabban's own editorial involvement when he incorporated the citations into his composition, modifying the original structure of the biblical narrative and condensing it where he deemed necessary'. For example, as Vollandt notes, "Alī ibn Rabban is usually closer to the Syriac: in Gen 16:11 he

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*ceedings of the British Academy* 16 (1930) 165–182, p. 174; G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 1, Vatican City, 1944, pp. 44–45.

88 Vollandt, *Arabic versions of the Pentateuch*, p. 93.

89 Vollandt, *Arabic versions of the Pentateuch*, pp. 64–67.

has *Allāh qad samī'a* "God has heard" (Arab<sup>Syr2</sup> *al-rabb qad 'araḥa* "God has recognized"), in imitation of the word *shema'* in the source text and thus retaining the pun on the proper name Ishmael'.<sup>90</sup>

It is therefore likely that 'Alī was drawing on an Arabic translation made in his former Christian community, though he did not hesitate to change it to suit his purposes or to reflect the Hebrew or Syriac original as he understood them. He was not uncritical in his borrowing, but demonstrated the same independence of purpose that he shows throughout chapters 9 and 10 in his apparent borrowings of proof texts from the source also known to Ibn Qutayba and in the interpretations he gives of the biblical passages he has chosen, as well as in earlier chapters in the versions he gives of anecdotes about Muḥammad and early Muslims.

### The Influence of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*

Unlike 'Alī's *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, his *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* did not attract any refutations from Christians. Nor does it appear to have been used at all extensively by Muslims. Its existence in a single medieval manuscript confirms that it did not circulate widely or exert much influence on apologists, polemicists or anyone else. It was possibly too singular in its approach to its topic, causing Muslims to see the weaknesses of many of the arguments it took from sources that would not command confidence even within Islam, and freeing Christians from the need to reply to arguments that were either ungrounded in generally accepted historical fact or derived from eccentric exegetical fantasising.

The one exception to the general indifference felt about the work was the identifications of Islam and Muḥammad in books of the Bible. These did command attention, and were thought sound enough to be used by even the most rigorous thinkers. It is thus a curious outcome that a work of varied and complex character found its way into the staple apologetic of Islam only in the form of a handful of the many scriptural verses it employed.

It is possible that the *Dīn wa-dawla* was known and used in the course of the tenth century. Sometime in the middle of the century the convert from Christianity al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb may have used it in the letter he wrote to his brother to explain why he has converted to Islam, just as he used 'Alī's *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, as has been seen above. There is difficulty in being certain,

90 Vollandt, *Arabic versions of the Pentateuch*, p. 94.

however, because the letter has not survived intact but only in quotations in later authors. Floris Sepmeijer claims that the twelfth century medical doctor, Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā ibn ʿĪsā, who himself converted to Islam, preserves lengthy parts of the work in his *Al-naṣiḥa l-īmāniyya fī faḍīḥat al-milla l-Naṣrāniyya*, including a number of biblical quotations.<sup>91</sup> If this is so—though there is no firm evidence to support it—then it would seem that the *Dīn wa-dawla* was already being employed selectively about a century after it was composed. Al-Ḥasan's letter does not quote anything from comments made by al-Ḥasan himself, but only a small handful of verses: John 14:26, 15:26, 16:13 (with 20:17), 14:16; Deuteronomy 33:2–3, Deuteronomy 18:15, 18:19; Isaiah 49:1–5.<sup>92</sup> These agree sufficiently closely with the versions in *Dīn wa-dawla* to raise the likelihood that they are taken from it.

At roughly the same time, the work may have been used by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-ʿĀmirī (d. 992) in his *Kitāb al-iʿlām bi-manāqib al-Islām*, a comparison between Islam and five other religious traditions including Judaism and Christianity. In a defence of the predictions about Muḥammad in the Torah and Gospel he quotes Deuteronomy 18:18–19, 18:15, 33:2–3; John 14:26 and Genesis 17:20.<sup>93</sup> Again, these agree very closely with the versions given by ʿAlī,<sup>94</sup> and allow the possibility that al-ʿĀmirī was using the *Dīn wa-dawla*. Alone, of course, these do not constitute strong evidence,<sup>95</sup> though together with another point, which is al-ʿĀmirī's disclosure that he knew other texts in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, Psalms and other books of the Bible,<sup>96</sup> they do appear to have originated from a work that was suspiciously similar in character to the *Dīn wa-dawla*. If this actually was the *Dīn wa-dawla*, then al-ʿĀmirī was clearly unconvinced by any other verses adduced by ʿAlī nor, it would seem, by any of his other arguments.

The first unequivocal indication of ʿAlī's work being used comes in the *Ghurār al-adilla* of the eleventh century Muʿtazilī, Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 1044), as has been seen above. In the parts of this lost work that have been preserved by the twelfth century Shīʿī scholar Maḥmūd ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥasan al-Ḥimmaṣī l-Rāzī (d. after 1204) Abū l-Ḥusayn brings together as many as 16 biblical passages from the *Dīn wa-dawla* together with ʿAlī's comments on them, and he

91 Sepmeijer, *Een weerlegging*, pp. 1–3.

92 Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā, *Al-naṣiḥa al-īmāniyya*, pp. 138–150.

93 *Kitāb al-iʿlām bi-manāqib al-Islām*, ed. A. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ghurāb, Cairo, 1967, pp. 202–204.

94 Thomas, 'Ṭabarī's *Book of religion and empire*'.

95 Schmidtke, 'The Muslim reception of biblical materials', p. 260, n. 9, is not persuaded.

96 Ed. Ghurāb, p. 208.

repeatedly gives the name ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī.<sup>97</sup> These passages are: Genesis 16:6–12; Deuteronomy 18:15, 18–19; Deuteronomy 33:2–3; Genesis 21:20; Habakkuk 3:3–13; Isaiah 60:1–7; Isaiah 21:1–10; Isaiah 35:1–2; Isaiah 40:3–5; Isaiah 21:13–15; Isaiah 42:11–13; Isaiah 41:17–20; Isaiah 43:19–20; Ezekiel 19:10–14; Zephaniah 3:8–10.

There can be no doubt that Abū l-Ḥusayn was using Chapters 9 and 10 of *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla*. As has been shown above, in the later twelfth century, Maḥmūd ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥimmaṣī preserved these passages and accompanying comments in his *Al-munqidh min al-taqlīd*,<sup>98</sup> while Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) very likely also had independent access to them; the latter preserves material from the *Dīn wa-dawla* that al-Ḥimmaṣī does not, and since he knew Abū l-Ḥusayn’s works it is plausible that he used the *Ghurār al-adilla* directly.<sup>99</sup> Some decades later the Yemeni Zaydī theologian ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zayd ibn Aḥmad al-‘Ansī (1196/7–1269) appears also to have taken passages in the *Dīn wa-dawla* from this same source, acknowledging both Abū l-Ḥusayn and Ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī by name. As Sabine Schmidtke points out, since there are substantial differences between al-‘Ansī and al-Ḥimmaṣī, both with regard to their arrangements of the quotations and their comments accompanying them, it is probable that al-‘Ansī had independent access to Abū l-Ḥusayn, either directly or through an intermediary.<sup>100</sup>

Meanwhile, the convert Naṣr ibn Yaḥyā (d. 1193 or 1163) was also quoting verses from ‘Alī, either directly or via the tenth century convert al-Ḥasan ibn Ayyūb.

It would appear, then, that one element of the *Dīn wa-dawla* was known and used within circles of converts from Christianity to Islam, which is understandable, and, thanks to the eleventh century Mu‘tazilī Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, within groups associated with later Mu‘tazilī thinking. But why did they only use material from the chapters on the Bible, ignoring other parts completely, and then only a tiny fraction of the passages ‘Alī had identified? No ready answer can be given. Camilla Adang wonders whether Abū l-Ḥusayn for his part only knew ‘Alī’s work through an excerpt: ‘It is not inconceivable that these chapters circulated as a separate booklet, under Ibn Rabban’s name, and that an excerpt of this booklet was made later on, containing mainly the most popular proof texts which had become fixed ingredients in Muslim polemics

97 Adang, ‘A rare case of biblical “testimonies” to the prophet Muḥammad’, pp. 302–315 (trans.), referring to ‘Alī on pp. 302, 306, 310, 311, 313.

98 Adang, ‘A rare case of biblical “testimonies” to the prophet Muḥammad’, pp. 297–300.

99 Schmidtke, ‘Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī and his transmission of biblical materials’, p. 107.

100 S. Schmidtke, ‘Biblical predictions of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Zaydis of Yemen’, pp. 10–11.

and apologetics.<sup>101</sup> Although there is no firm evidence to support this, it may have happened, and it would certainly explain why the only parts of the works known in later times were the few biblical proof texts.

One is left with the suspicion that neither the majority of the biblical verses in the *Dīn wa-dawla* nor the evidence in the other chapters proved persuasive to later readers, either as weapons for polemic against Christians and Jews or as elements for apologetic among Muslims themselves. So they were mostly ignored, looked on as the personal rationalisations and justifications of an individual who had moved away from the faith of his fathers and sought whatever reasons he could find to support the step he had taken.

The following abbreviations are used in the edition below:

- A MS Manchester, The John Rylands Library 69 (Crawford 631).
- B MS Cairo, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, *ʿIlm al-kalām* 1377.
- C A. Mingana (ed.), *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla fī ithbāt nubuwwat al-nabī Muḥammad*, Cairo, 1923.
- D ʿA. Nuwayhid, *Al-dīn wa-l-dawla, fī ithbāt nubuwwat al-nabī Muḥammad*, Beirut, 1973.
- E A. Mingana (trans.), *The Book of religion and empire, a semi-official defence and exposition of Islām*, Manchester, 1922.

In the translation, the abbreviation (M) denotes footnotes that have been repeated from Mingana, *Religion and empire*.

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101 Adang, 'A rare case of biblical "testimonies" to the prophet Muḥammad', p. 299.



كتاب الدين والدولة  
في إثبات نبوة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

**The Book of Religion and Empire  
in confirmation of the prophethood of Muhammad  
may God bless him and give him peace**

∴

## بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

﴿وبه نستعين﴾

قال علي بن ربن<sup>1</sup> الطبري مولى أمير المؤمنين:

الحمد لله على دين الإسلام الذي<sup>2</sup> من ألفه فاز، ومن قام به اهتدى، ومن نصره نجا، ومن ناصبه هلك. به عرف الباري، وعليه تحوم الأمم، وإليه تشوّت النفوس، وبه نيل الأمل عاجلاً وآجلاً، لأنّه النور المعمور،<sup>3</sup> والجسر المعبور إلى دار السلامة والخلود الذي لا كدر فيه ولا غرور.

فجعلنا الله تعالى من أهل السنّة، وجنّبنا الباطل وما يجني على أهله، وإنّ الله حميد محمود لا نهاية للملكه ولا مبدّل لكلماته. إنّ المنان الحكيم الذي أظهر الحق وأناره، وفطر العباد وأرسل رسوله وحبيبه وخليله إلى الشاكين فيه يدعوهم إلى الفوز الدائم والنور الساطع، حتى إذا دنت واقتربت الساعة بعث الله تعالى نبينا محمداً صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>4</sup> إلى كافة الخلق ﴿بشيراً ونذيراً وسراجاً منيراً﴾. فصدع بأمر ربه وأهاب أعداءه بترغيب وترهيب | وتعليم وتقويم، يحثّ على الملكوت ونعيمها، ويزجر عن النار والتهافت<sup>5</sup> فيها، ويؤدّي عن الله ما نزل به جبريل الملك إليه من التنزيل الذي لا يأتيه الباطل من بين يديه ولا من خلفه، ولا يغادر حقاً جاءت به الأنبياء قبله، بل يؤكّده ويؤيّد به ويأمر بالإيمان بهم أجمعين، والصلاة على الأولين منهم والآخرين.

<sup>1</sup>So in C and D; A and B: زين ... الحمد الذي<sup>2</sup> these words are added in the margin in A. <sup>3</sup>D:

والتهاون<sup>5</sup>So in A and B; C and D: صلعم<sup>4</sup>B: المعمر



**In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful  
to him we turn for help**

2v

‘Alī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī, associate<sup>1</sup> of the Commander of the Faithful, said:

Praise be to God for the religion of Islam: whoever embraces it triumphs, whoever practises it is guided, whoever upholds it is saved, and whoever opposes it perishes. Through it the Creator is known, around it the nations swarm, for it souls desire, and through it is gained the here and hereafter. For it is the living light and the bridge that leads to the abode of safety and eternity, where there is no tribulation or deception.

God the almighty has placed us among the People of the Way and has removed from us error and what harms his people. For God is the praiseworthy, the praised, there is no end to his kingdom<sup>2</sup> and no alteration to his words.<sup>3</sup> He is the wise benefactor who has made the truth known and illumined it. He created humankind, and to those who doubted him he sent his messenger, his beloved, his friend, to call them to everlasting triumph and radiant light. Thus, when the hour approached and drew near, God almighty sent our Prophet Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) to the whole of creation as a herald and warner,<sup>4</sup> and a luminous lamp. He obeyed the command of his Lord and appealed to his enemies with inducement and intimidation, | instruction and redirection. He exhorted to the Kingdom and its blessing and he exhorted against the Fire and complacency about it; he discharged for God the revelation that the angel Gabriel revealed to him, which error could not destroy either in his care or after him;<sup>5</sup> and he did not betray any truth that the prophets had brought before him, but confirmed it and strengthened it, enjoining faith in them all, and prayer for the first and last of them.

3r

<sup>1</sup> The term *mawlā*, which ‘Alī clearly uses as a mark of esteem, would be understood at this time as denoting a person’s closeness to the caliph. It ‘was regularly granted to Turkish generals and other favourites’ (see P. Crone (A.J. Wensinck), art. ‘Mawlā’, *El2*, section II.3 (b)).

<sup>2</sup> This may be a deliberate correction of the words ‘Your kingdom come’ from the Lord’s Prayer, emphasising that God’s power is realised not in the future but already in the present.

<sup>3</sup> This tacit criticism of the ways in which Jews and Christians were generally thought to have tampered with their scripture hints at one of the main themes of the work, that correct interpretation of the biblical books attests to the truth of faith as this is given in Islam.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Q 33:45.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Alī alludes to another aspect of his main theme, that because the teachings given to Muḥammad have not been lost or changed, they can serve to interpret teachings given to earlier messengers.

قال الله في محكم كتابه: ﴿قُلْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نَفَرَّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾<sup>1</sup>. وقال: ﴿آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نَفَرَّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ﴾<sup>2</sup> الآية. وقال فيمن أشرك بالله جلَّ وعزَّ<sup>3</sup> أو اتخذ<sup>4</sup> له ولدًا أو ندًا: ﴿قُلْ يَا هُوَاللَّهُ أَحَدٌ، اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ، لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾<sup>5</sup>. وقال: ﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾<sup>6</sup>. وقال: ﴿أَفَنُفِّنْ<sup>7</sup> أَسْأَسْ بِنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٍ أَوْ مَنْ<sup>8</sup> أَسْأَسْ بِنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرْفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾<sup>9</sup>.

فإلى هذا كان دعاؤه، وعليه أسس بنيان<sup>10</sup> دعوته، وبه افتتح شرائع دينه وشرائط<sup>3v</sup> حقه الذي كفر<sup>6</sup> به مشركو<sup>7</sup> العرب وحملة الكتاب، فإنهم كتموا اسمه وحرّفوا رسمه الموجود في كتب أنبيائهم عليهم السلام، ممّا أنا مظهره ومبيح سرّه وكاشف ستره حتى يراه القارئ عياناً ويزداد بالإسلام قوة وسروراً.

وأسلك في ذلك سبيلاً أسدّ وأجدى ممّا سلك غيري من مؤلفي الكتب في هذا الفن. فإنّ منهم من قصر وبتّر وأدغم حجّته ولم يفسّر، ومنهم من

<sup>1</sup>A and <sup>7</sup>كفرت <sup>6</sup>C and D: آمن <sup>5</sup>B, C and D: فن <sup>4</sup>B: أي جعل <sup>3</sup>B: عز وجل <sup>2</sup>B: مسلمين <sup>1</sup>B:

مشركوا

In the clarity of his book, God said, 'Say, We believe in God and what is revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we have surrendered to him.'<sup>6</sup> He said, 'The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers. Each believes in God, his angels, his books and his messengers; we make no distinction between any of his messengers' and the rest of the verse.<sup>7</sup> And he said about the one who associates others with God, great and mighty, or ascribes to him a son or equal, 'Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally besought of all! He begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him'.<sup>8</sup> And he said, 'Say, People of the Book, come to an agreement between us and you, that we shall worship none but God and that we shall ascribe no partner to him, and that none of us shall take lords beside God. And if they turn away, then say, Bear witness that we have surrendered.'<sup>9</sup> And he said, 'Is he who founded his building upon duty to God and his good pleasure better, or he who founded his building on the brink of a crumbling, overhanging precipice so that it toppled with him into the fire of Hell? God does not guide people who do wrong.'<sup>10</sup> Towards this were his proclamations, on it he founded the edifice | of his call, and with it he introduced the revealed laws of his religion and the stipulations of its truth. But the Arab associators and the bearers of the book denied it. For they concealed his name and distorted the outline of him that was found in the books of their prophets (peace be upon them).<sup>11</sup> I will make this plain, reveal its mystery and remove its covering, so that the reader can see it clearly and his surrender will intensify in strength and delight.

3v

In this I will follow a way that is more appropriate and useful than that followed by other authors of books of this kind. Some of these have abbreviated,

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6 Q 2:136.

7 Q 2:285.

8 Q 112.

9 Q 3:64.

10 Q 9:109, reminiscent of Matthew 7:24–27.

11 'Alī portrays Islam in the familiar form of a recall to the monotheism that had been corrupted by pagan Arabs, Jews and Christians. His accusation alludes to the generalised complaints in the Qur'ān about the People of the Book concealing (Q 2:140, 2:146, 3:71) and distorting (Q 2:75, 5:41) their scriptures, though he expresses them as specific misinterpretations of references to the person of Muḥammad. A great proportion of the *Dīn wa-dawla* is devoted to demonstrating that as long as the Bible is interpreted correctly it can be shown to contain numerous predictions of Muḥammad.

احتجّ<sup>1</sup> على أهل الكتاب بالشعر وبما لم يعرفوه من كتبهم، ومنهم من حشى دفتي<sup>2</sup> كتابه بمخاطبة المسلمين دون المشركين، ثمّ ترجم حججه بأوعر كلام وأبعده من الإيفهام. حتّى لو<sup>3</sup> أراد المخالف أن يقول إنّهُ في ذلك كحاطب ليل أو حميل سيل يتعلّق بكلّ شوك وشجر وغثّ وسمين من الكلام، وإنّ الذي احتجّ به ليس ببيان بل كتمان، وليس بتبصير بل تعوير، ولا بتسهيل بل تعوير، كان ذلك له.

ومن ألف كتاباً في مثل هذا الفنّ الجليل الهادي المستنير العامّ المنفعة لأهل الأديان كلّهم كان جديراً أن يجعله مفهوماً سهلاً وأن يخاصم نفسه<sup>4</sup> ويساجل خصمه ولا يعلو<sup>5</sup> عليه ولا يربّي. بل يفهم ولا ييهم، وينصف ولا يظلم. ويستعمل الرفق ويحسن سياقة الكلام<sup>6</sup> وتنويره ويأتي بالبراهين والمعارضات التي إنّ ردّها المخالف<sup>7</sup> خرج عن نحلته ودينه. فإنّه إذا<sup>8</sup> فعل ذلك به ركه | ورماه<sup>9</sup> بسهمه<sup>4r</sup> واقتاده بزمامه.

وقد تحرّيت ذلك بعون الله تعالى، وقربّت المعاني ليفهمها القارئ ولا يمتري. ولم أدع لأهل الذمّة حجة ولا مسألة صعبة ولا علاقة إلّا حكيتُ ثمّ حلّلتُ بتوفيق الله وعونه وبركة خليفته جعفر الإمام المتوكل على الله أمير المؤمنين أطال الله بقاءه، وبما اهتديت به واستفدت عنه وسمعت من ألفاظه، ولما<sup>10</sup> هو مغرم كلّف به

<sup>1</sup>B: احتاج <sup>2</sup>B: وفقي الى، a misreading of A. <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: فإن

<sup>4</sup>Reading with B. This word is lacking in A owing to a hole in the MS. <sup>5</sup>A and B: يعلوا <sup>6</sup>Reading with B. This word is lacking in A owing to a hole in the MS. <sup>7</sup>Reading with B. This word is lacking in A owing to a hole in the MS. <sup>8</sup>C and D: إن (wrongly). <sup>9</sup>A note written at the top of the

مجلس المتوكل سنة ٢٣٢، مائتين واثنتين وثلاثين، هجم مجلس المتوكل سنة ٢٣٢، مائتين واثنتين وثلاثين، هجم عليه الأتراك وهو في بيت خلوته وقتلوه سنة مائتين وسبع وأربعين، رحمه الله تعالى. وبما<sup>10</sup>B: ١٠

curtailed and compacted their evidence, and have not given an explanation. Others have argued against the People of the Book in verse, and with things they do not recognise from their books. And others have packed within the covers of their books addresses to Muslims and not associators, and have then transmitted their evidence in the most rugged discourse and set it far from comprehending.<sup>12</sup> So if the opponent were to think of saying that in this he was like someone gathering wood by night or carried along on a flood clutching at any thorn or bush, crude or elegant utterance, and that what he put forward was not explanation but obfuscation, not insight but loss of sight, not making easy but making harder, he would have every reason to do this.

Whoever writes a book on a subject such as this, that is so important, guiding, enlightening, wide-ranging and beneficial to followers of all the religions, should take care to make it comprehensible and easy, to contend with himself and engage with his contender, though should not patronise or overwhelm him. He should be comprehensible and not unintelligible, fair and not unfair. He should be friendly in his approach, have control of the flow of speech in his explanation, and adduce proofs and responses that will make the opponent abandon his sect and religion if he were to oppose them. If he does this to him, he will pursue him, | strike him with his arrow, and tie him up under his control.

4r

This is what I have tried to do with the help of God almighty, clarifying the meanings so that the reader may understand them and not be in doubt. I have not left to the client people any argument, awkward question or related point that I have not described and then resolved by the good fortune and help of God, and the blessing of his Caliph Ja'far, the Imam al-Mutawakkil 'alā Llāh, Commander of the Faithful (may God prolong his life),<sup>13</sup> in what I have been guided to by him, the benefit I have derived from him, and the utterances I

12 Unless 'Alī is indulging in hyperbole, these descriptions indicate that he knew of a number of defences of Muḥammad that were based on interpretations of scriptural texts. Whatever they were, the great majority have disappeared without trace, for apart from his own work, among the only others known from earlier times are the letter written to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VI on behalf of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd in about 796 by Abū al-Rabī' Muḥammad ibn al-Layth, which is extant (see *CMR* 1, pp. 347–353), the Baghdad Mu'tazilī Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamir's lost *Kitāb al-ḥujja fi ithbāt al-nabī* from before 825 (see *CMR* 1, p. 534), which was written in verse and may very well be the work which 'Alī singles out, and the Caliph al-Ma'mūn's lost *Risāla fi a'lām al-nubuwwa* from before 833 (see *CMR* 1, pp. 582–584). Of course, many works now lost were being written by Muslims against Christianity at this time, and a number may have included defences of Muḥammad.

13 Al-Mutawakkil reigned from 847 to 861. It was not uncommon to use the title *Khalīfat Allāh*, rather than *Khalīfat Rasūl Allāh*, in the time of the Umayyads and early 'Abbasids.

من بثّ مثل هذا الكتاب وتخليده إغرازاً لأسباب الدين، وإصلاحاً لمحبّته، وترغيباً لمن جهل فضله فيه، وما ابتلى الله الإسلام وأهله في زمانه، وتجدّد لهم من كراماته، وتعرّفهم من النماء والزيادة والاستعلاء برفق تدبيره. وإني وجدت جميع من خالف الإسلام إنما خالفوه لأربع علل، أولاً من الشكّ في خبر النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، والثانية الأنفة والعزّة، والثالثة التقليد والإلف، والرابعة البلادة والغباوة. فلعمري لو ميزوا الخبر وعقلوه، لقبّلوه ولم يدفعوه، ولما طلبوا ما عند الله بمخالفة أمر الله. فالواجب علينا أن نقصد لتثبيت الخبر عندهم، ونفي الشكّ عنهم، ونبيّن لهم أصول الأخبار وفروعها وعللها ومجاريها، والوجوه التي بها يعرف حقّها من باطلها، والأسباب التي لها<sup>3</sup> قبلت الأمم أنبياءها وبها دانت لدعاتها. ثمّ نقيس<sup>4</sup> أخبارنا بأخبارهم، ومن نقلها إلينا بمنّ نقلها إليهم، فإن كانت<sup>4v</sup> حجّتنا وحجّتهم في تصديقهم من يصدّقون من أنبيائهم واحدة، فلا حجّة لهم عند الله وعند أنفسهم في تكذيبهم صاحبنا وتصديق أصحابهم، لأنّه إذا احتجّ مختلفان في دعوى من الدعاوي بحجّة واحدة فهما بها مشتركان سيّان، يجب لأحدهما بها ما<sup>5</sup> يجب للآخر لا محالة.

<sup>1</sup>C and D: وإفلاجاً <sup>2</sup>B omits: صلى الله عليه وسلم <sup>3</sup>B: بها <sup>4</sup>C and D: تقابل <sup>5</sup>B adds: لا (wrongly).

have heard from him. He is dedicated and committed to the circulation and continuation of books such as this as a support to the reasons for the religion, to make the proofs for it prosper, and to arouse a desire for it in those who are ignorant of its superiority and of the fact that God has chosen Islam and its followers in his time, has renewed his marks of honour on them and has made them know growth, increase and superiority through the gentleness of his oversight.<sup>14</sup>

I have discovered that all those who oppose Islam do so for four reasons. Firstly, out of doubt over the report of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), while the second is disdain and loftiness, the third adherence to tradition and custom, and the fourth stupidity and foolishness. But goodness me, if they only examined the report closely and understood it, they would accept it and not reject it. But since they inquire into what is of God in violation of the command of God, we are obliged to try to substantiate the report they possess,<sup>15</sup> to remove doubt from them and to explain to them the primary and secondary elements of the reports, their causes and outcome, the ways in which the truth in them can be known from their error, and the reasons why the nations accept their prophets and obey their preachers. Then we will compare our reports | with theirs, and those who delivered them to us with those who delivered them to them, and if our evidence and their evidence about their trust in the prophets they trust is identical, then they have no pretext before God or themselves for maintaining their denial of our master and trust in their masters.<sup>16</sup> For if two opponents produce identical evidence about any claim and they both alike accept it, what applies to one about it must undeniably apply to the other.<sup>17</sup>

4v

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14 This comment comes close to saying that the *Dīn wa-dawla* was written with the caliph's active encouragement.

15 'Alī means here that he will interpret the biblical texts according to their correct meaning and not in the way Jews and Christians have done.

16 By 'our master' 'Alī must mean Muḥammad, so by 'their masters' he presumably means Jesus and the prophets of the Old Testament whose works he will scrutinise later on, making no qualitative distinction between them.

17 If there is any reflection here of 'Alī's own experience of moving from Christianity to Islam, his words suggest that he could see nothing inherently different in the scriptures of the two faiths, and that claims about Jesus representing a unique kind of revelation as the embodiment of God are not relevant. So it is a straightforward matter of deciding whether Islam is predicted in the biblical 'reports' and should thus be accepted as the last revealed teaching.

## في وجوه الخبر والإجماع العامي

الأخبار كلها على ضربين، إمّا حقّ<sup>1</sup> وإمّا باطل. ولها ثلاثة أوقات: خبر ماضٍ، وخبر مقيم، وخبر منتظر. ومنها ما يصدق مرّةً ويكذب أخرى، وهو كقولك: "جاء فلان أو شخص" ، فقد يكون ذلك حقًا ويكون باطلاً. ومنها ما هو حقّ في كلّ وقت، كان أو يكون، ماضٍ أو مستأنف<sup>2</sup>، لأنّه خبر كلّ دأّم جليّ، وهو مثل قول القائل: "دار الفلك أو هو<sup>3</sup> دأّر غداً"، وقوله: "أشرق الشمس أمس"، وهي مشرقة<sup>5</sup> بعد سنة"، ومثل قوله: "إنّ أكثر ذوات الأرحام إذا وضعن أحلبن، وأكثر ذوات الأجنحة إذا سافدن بضنّ، وإذا بضنّ فرخن". فهذا وما أشبهه خبر حقّ كلّ في كلّ وقت وهو الإجماع الأوّل الأعمّ.

ومن الأخبار ما هو كذب كلّ في كلّ وقت تقدّم أو تأخّر، وهو قول القائل: "هذا أنور من الشمس وأحلى من الشهد، وهذا الفرس أسرع من البرق أو أقطف<sup>6</sup> من قراد"، وقوله: "اجتمع الناس كلّهم حتى لم يبق أحد"، "وإنّ فلاناً خيراً من الناس<sup>7</sup>"<sup>5r</sup> وأعلمهم كلّهم، وإنّ عنده علقيساوي كلّ شيء"، "وإنّ بلاده أعمر<sup>8</sup> بلاد الله كلّها". فهذا وما أشبهه من الكلام كذب كلّ، لكنّه مستعمل بين أكثر الناس في مجاز كلامهم غير مستنكر.

وبعد الإجماع الأوّل الأعمّ الذي ذكرتُ، إجماع ثانٍ هو دون الأوّل في الكثرة والعموم، مثل خبر آدم وحواء، وأنهما أبوا البشر. فإنّه صحيح عندنا لا شكّ فيه

<sup>1</sup>B: صحيح <sup>2</sup>A and B: مؤتلف <sup>3</sup>B: وهو <sup>4</sup>C and D: أو قوله (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>B: مشرقت <sup>6</sup>A note in the same hand in A reads: أي أبطأ حركة منه <sup>7</sup>So in A and B (as is also confirmed by the catch word at the bottom of fol. 4<sup>v</sup>); C and D: البشر (wrongly). <sup>8</sup>C and D: أثمر



### The forms of report and common consensus

All reports are of two kinds, true or false, and they have three tenses, past report, present report and future report. Among these is what is true at one time and untrue at another, such as one's saying, 'Someone came or went'; this is either true or false. Among them is what is true at all times; it has been or is, gone or to come, for it is a universal, timeless and evident report, like the speaker's saying, 'The heavens have rolled round or will do so to tomorrow', or his saying, 'The sun rose yesterday and will rise in a year', or his saying, 'The majority of animals with wombs give milk when they give birth, and the majority of animals with wings lay eggs after mating, and after being laid these hatch'. This and the like is a fully true report at all times; it is the first most common consensus.

Among reports are those that are utter lies at all times, past or future, such as the saying of the speaker, 'This is brighter than the sun and sweeter than honey', or 'This horse is faster than lightning or slower than a tick', or one's words, 'All the people gathered together so that not one was left', or 'So and so is the best of | people and the most knowledgeable of them all', or 'He possesses an object 5r with a value equal to everything', or 'His native land is the most populous of all of God's lands'. These and statements like them are all lies, though they are used among most people in figurative speaking without protest.

Following the first most common consensus I have mentioned is a second consensus which is less than the first in consequence and generality, such as the report about Adam and Eve, that they are the parents of humankind. This is correct in our view, without any doubt, according to the consensus of

لإجماع أكثر الناس عليه وشهادات الأنبياء على صحته، وهو عند خلق كثير كذب وزور مثل الهند والصابئة وأشباههم<sup>1</sup>.

وبعد الإجماع الثاني إجماع ثالث، وهو دون الثاني في الكثرة والعموم، وذلك مثل خبر الروم والهند<sup>2</sup> والصين فإنه وإن كان أكثر من يجيء به سوق الناس وعوامهم فإنه حق لا يشك فيه للإجماع القائم والشواهد الموجودة عليه.

وبعد هذا الإجماع الثالث إجماع رابع، وهو<sup>3</sup> دون الثالث في الكثرة والعموم، وهو مثل خبر ظهور الإسكندر والتبابعة وجم الملك وأمثالهم. فإنه مقبول صحيح لإجماع خلق كثير عليه، غير أن من يُجمع على خبر هذه الأقاليم أكثر ممن يُجمع على خبر التبابعة والإسكندر.

وإجماع خامس يتوارثه أهله منذ دهر طويل، مثل خبر البددة والزنادقة والمجوس وهو حق عندهم لا يشكون فيه، وباطل عندنا لا يرتاب به، إنما ظهر بالخرقة والأغاليط،<sup>4</sup> ثم صار عندهم ديناً بالتوارث والتقليد، ثم بالإلف والعادة.

فهذا من خاصيات الأخبار ولطيف مداخلها على الأنفس والعقول موجود غير مدفوع. وإن منها ما إذا سمعه السامع طابت به نفسه، وطار في وجهه دمه، وذرفت عيناه ضحكاً واهتزت استغراباً. ومنها ما يُذري دمع السامع ويضني جسمه ويذبل وجهه، مثل أخبار الرزايا والنكبات. ومنها ما إذا سمعه السامع اهتز للجود ودرّ للمستحلب المستميع، مثل مدح الأسخياء ووصف ما يعتاضون بجودهم من المدائح والجوائز<sup>5</sup> في الدنيا والآخرة. ومنها ما يُبخل السامع ويؤيسه من

<sup>1</sup>D: (wrongly). أو أشباههم. <sup>2</sup>A and B add: الروم. <sup>3</sup>So in B; A, C and D: هو. <sup>4</sup>A note at the top of the folio in A reads: تمويه وسيلة بارزة. <sup>5</sup>So in B; A, C and D: والجوازي.

most people and the testimonies of the prophets to its correctness, though according to many people such as the Indians, Sabians<sup>18</sup> and the like it is a lie and falsehood.

Following the second consensus is a third consensus which is less than the second in consequence and generality, such as a report from the Byzantines, Indians or Chinese. Although most of those who circulate it are ordinary and common people, it is truth without any doubt because of the continuing consensus and the testimonies to it that exist.

Following this third consensus is a fourth consensus which is less than the third in consequence and generality, such as the report of the advent of Alexander, the Tabābi'a, King Jam and others like them.<sup>19</sup> This is accepted as correct because of the consensus of many people about it, despite the fact that those who agree on the report about the regions are more than those who agree on the report of the Tabābi'a and Alexander.

A fifth consensus will have been transmitted by its people for a long time, such as the report of the Buddhists, the Manicheans and the Zoroastrians. It is truth among them and they have no doubt about it, and it is falsehood among us without any question about it. | It came into being through trickery and questionable claims, and then it became a religion to them through inheritance and acceptance, and then through familiarity and habit.

5v

That these are among the characteristics of reports, and their subtle way of being introduced to minds and intellects, is real and undeniable. Among them is what when someone hears it he feels happy at it, his blood suffuses his face, his eyes shed tears of laughter and flicker with wonder. Among them are those that make the hearer weep, make his body grow weak and make his face grow pale, such as the reports of disasters and calamities. Among them is what when someone hears it—such as praise of the open-handed and descriptions of the praises and rewards they receive in this world and the next for their generosity—he is moved to generosity and pours out sustenance upon the one who is seeking and asking his help. Among them is what makes the hearer mean-minded and causes him to despair of goodness, such as the mention of

18 In the Qur'ān, the Ṣābi'ūn are listed together with Jews, Christians and Muslims as those who believe in God (Q 5:69, 2:62; see also 22:17).

19 These would be remembered as rulers of past times whose history had taken on semi-fabulous overtones: Alexander was almost proverbial for his conquests; the Tabābi'a were kings of the Ḥimyarite dynasty of southern Arabia in the centuries immediately before Islam; and Jam, or Jamshīd, was an ancient Iranian hero. All were the subjects of legends and romances, and would thus qualify to be believed in by ordinary people.

الخير، مثل ذكر من أفقره<sup>1</sup> التبذير واضطره إلى المسكنة<sup>2</sup> والإستكفاف. ومنها ما يغريه ويغضبه ويبسط يده بالضرب ولسانه بالشتم. ومنها ما يلهب شهوته ويحرك ساكنه ويغلب غرامه، مثل ذكر الغواني ونعت محاسنهن وطيب نشرهن ولين ملمسهن وحسن مبتسمهن لا سيما إذا صيغ ذلك الخبر بجواهر النعمات الملهية الشجية. ومنها ما يحمل على تقحم<sup>3</sup> الأهوال والاستقتال بعد انقراض المخبر الأول بألف عام بل يزيد مثل ما ذكرنا من بددة الهند والمجوس وأشباههم، فإن من الهند من يحرق نفسه بضروب من الإحراق، ومنهم من يرمي | ببدنه<sup>4</sup> لسباع 6r الطير حتى تأكله، ومنهم من يهيم على وجهه في الأرض الفلاة حتى يتلف فيها، ومنهم من يرمي بنفسه<sup>5</sup> من جبل عال فيتردى على شجرة منصوبة من حديد ذات شعب مشحودة مؤللة<sup>6</sup> كالصوارم والشفار، اغتراراً منهم بأخبار أذاها لهم قوم من الكذابين العتاة عن نفر من الخبيثة الدهاة.

وإنما ذكرت ذلك، ليعلم من يقرأه بأن قد يجب التحرز والهرب منها إلى ملاجئ الحكمة ومحالّ الفكرة والاعتبار، فإنها أضرباً لأنفس وأسرع فيها من السهام القاتلة والاستهيام، ومدخلها على القلوب من باين طالما غرّاً وكذباً بما يعرفهما من التخاييل والظن، وهما حاستا السمع والبصر اللتان بهما تدرك سوانح الأخبار. أما البصر فربما خيل الشيء الواحد شيئين ورأى<sup>7</sup> المستوي كالمعوج مثل المرادي في الأنهار، وربما صور المعلوم كالموجود مثل اليلع والسراب. وأما السمع فربما سمع إنسان دويّاً فظن أنه الرعد، أو يسمع من تحيل كلباً أو أسداً أو قرياً فيرى أن ذلك<sup>8</sup> هرير أو هدير<sup>9</sup> أو زئير.

<sup>1</sup>B adds: فرطة <sup>2</sup>B: المسكنة <sup>3</sup>B: تقحمه <sup>4</sup>So in A and B; C and D: بدنه <sup>5</sup>So in A; B and C: نفسه

<sup>6</sup>A note in the margin of A reads: الألف يقال أنه يؤله من الباب الأول إذا طعنه بالحربة <sup>7</sup>So in C

بدليل <sup>9</sup>B: أن ذلك <sup>8</sup>B omits: وأرى (wrongly). <sup>9</sup>B: وأرى (wrongly).

someone who is made destitute because of wastefulness and forced to poverty and begging. Among them is what provokes him, annoys him and makes him stretch out his hand to strike and his tongue to insult. Among them is what inflames his desire, consumes his calm and overcomes his passion, such as the mention of pretty girls, the description of their attractions, the perfume they exude, the softness of their touch and the beauty of their smile, especially if this report is made up of entertaining and moving gems of song. Among them are those that urge one to rush into alarming situations and the risk of death a thousand or more years after the first reporter has passed away. Such are the Buddhists of India, the Zoroastrians and the like, whom we have mentioned. For among the Indians are those who burn themselves in different ways; among them are those who cast | their bodies to birds of prey to consume; among them are those who wander about through the wastes of the world until they meet their end there; among them are those who throw themselves off high mountains and fall onto trees of iron planted in the ground, with branches sharpened and pointed like tips and blades, because of their delusion over reports which insolent and lying people gave them from groups of sly evil-doers.<sup>20</sup>

6r

I have mentioned this only so that the reader may know the necessity to be wary and to flee from them to the shelters of wisdom and the places of thought and reflection, for they are more harmful to souls and pass more speedily into them than deadly darts or pangs of love. Their way into hearts is through two doors, which can deeply deceive and delude through the fancies and imaginings that can take hold of them. These are the two senses of hearing and sight, through which the ideas in reports are perceived. Sight can give the impression that one thing is two things, and see what is straight as bent, such as poles in rivers; it can portray the non-existent as existing, such as the phantasm and the mirage. As for hearing, a man may hear a noise and imagine it is thunder, or he may hear someone pretending to be a dog, a lion or a turtledove, and take it as growling, cooing or roaring.

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20 The practices of these groups are all intended to be self-evidently irrational and ridiculous.

## في<sup>1</sup> الدلائل على تصحيح الأخبار

قد قدّمتُ القول في تفصيل الأخبار وعجيب ما تُورث<sup>2</sup> النفس والأبدان من الحوادث والآثار. فأما ما أطبقت<sup>3</sup> عليه الأمم في تثبيتها ورأته استقصاءً وتحرزاً<sup>6v</sup> فيها، فهو أنّه إذا ادّعى مدّع حقّاً أو جاء نبأ من الأنباء، ثمّ أحضر رجلين من أهل القناعة والعفو أو ثلاثة ثبت بهم الحقّ وزال الشكّ والشبهة عن الحاكم والمحكوم عليه. فأما خبر الأنبياء فلائنه يؤدّي إمّا إلى الجنة أو إلى النار، فلن نكتفي<sup>3</sup> فيه بشاهدين ولا بقسامة ولا بأمة دون أن يكون معهم شهادات الحقّ ومقياس العبر التي أنا ذاكرها، لأنّا قد رأينا أمماً كثيرة العدد، عظيمة القدر، موصوفة بالأفهام والأحلام، يشهدون لعدّة من الخبثة الكذابين بجميع ما ادّعوه، مثل الزنادقة والمجوس، إمّا تقليداً وإلّفاً كما بينا، وإمّا غباوة ومحكاً،<sup>4</sup> وإمّا إجباراً أو كرهاً كما فعل زرادشت متنبئ المجوس فإنّه لم يزل يتأتّى لبستاشف الملك حتى وصل إليه وزرع من وسأوسه في صدره، ثمّ لم يزل يختله بذكر الله والدعاء إليه ويفتل في الذروة والغارب حتى قتله عن دينه ولوّاه إلى رأيه، ثمّ أظهر له ما كان يضمّر<sup>5</sup> من الشرك، وزين له نكاح الأمهات والبنات وأكل القذر المذرم من النجاسات، فكان الملك بعد ذلك هو الذي أكره أهل<sup>6</sup> مملكته على دينه.

وفعل ماني شبيهاً بذلك، فإنّه ظهر في زمان كان الغالب فيه دينان: النصرانية والمجوسية، فاخذع النصراني بأنّ قال لهم إنّهم رسول المسيح عليه السلام، وخبّل المجوس بأنّ وافقهم على الأصلين.

أومحكاً: B; لحاح وعناد: A note below the line in A reads: 4A يكتفي: B; 3B يورث: 2B فصل في: 1B

6D omits this word. 5C and D: يضمّره 5 وغباوة

### Forms of evidence for the verification of reports

I have now spoken about the classification of reports and the curious ways in which events and impressions affect body and soul. Concerning what the nations agree | about substantiating them and regard as cautiousness and prudence about them is that when someone makes a claim about truth or produces some item of news and adduces two or three moderate and fair-minded men, truth is established through them and doubt and uncertainty fall away from the judge and the man under sentence. But as regards the report of the prophets, since it leads to either paradise or the fire, we can never be satisfied about it from two witnesses or a group or a nation, unless the testimonies to truth and the arguments of vigour which I shall detail accompany them. For we have seen that nations great in number, mighty in extent and characterised by men of understanding and discrimination bear witness to numerous lying deceivers in all that they claim, such as the Manicheans and Zoroastrians, either through keeping to tradition and custom, as we have shown, through ignorance and quarrelsomeness, or through compulsion and force. This was the case with Zarādušt the false prophet of the Zoroastrians, for he kept on trying to get to King Bishtāsaf until he managed to enter his presence and sowed his insinuations in his heart. Then he went on wiping away from him the remembrance of God and prayer to him, and twisting over and under until he twisted him from his religion and bent him to his own view. Then he revealed to him the dualism that he was keeping hidden, and painted for him a picture of intercourse with mothers and daughters and of eating rotten, putrid filth. After this it was the king who forced the people of his realm to follow his religion.<sup>21</sup>

6v

Mānī did something similar to this. He appeared at a time when for the most part there were two religions, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. He misled the Christians by telling them that he was the apostle of Christ (peace be upon him), and he beguiled the Zoroastrians by agreeing with them on the two principles.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The assumption implicit here is that the king originally followed the pure monotheism that is natural to all humans.

<sup>22</sup> The principles of light and darkness that were the fundamental elements of Zoroastrian belief.

7r فلما وجدنا من الإجماع ما هو هكذا، ووجدنا منه ما هو كالإسلام، علمنا أن قبول كل إجماع فتنة، وردّ كل إجماع ضلالة، وأن الإجماع وحده ليس بكاف في تثبيت النبوة دون شهادات الحق واماراته التي جمعها الله تعالى للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>1</sup> فن أراد حقائق مثل هذه الأخبار وتعديلها احتاج إلى أن يفهم<sup>2</sup> الخبر الوارد عليه، ويتدبر غرضه وغوره، فإن وجد مكذبه فيه ومبطله معه لم يحتج إلى برهان غيره، وذلك تخبر مسيلة الكذاب، فإنه لما ادعى النبوة سئل عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>3</sup> فصدق به وآمن بنبوته، وسئل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup> عنه فكذبه. فكان في تصديق مسيلة من يكذبه، تكذيب منه لنفسه ودليل على مناقضته وسخفه. ولذلك قالت العلماء إنه إذا اتحل النبوة منتحل مبطل لم يمهله الله حتى يجري التناقض على لسانه ليحتج به على من صدق به، كما أجرى الله على لسان زرادشت وماني ونظرائهما فإنهما قد ناقضا<sup>5</sup> وكذبا وتذبذبا.

قال زرادشت إن هرمز—وهو اسم معبودهم—قديم رحيم تام العلم والقدرة، ثم لم يلبث أن وصفه بما يوصف به العجزة الجهال في قوله: "إن الشيطان تولد عن فكرته وإن الله يعجز عن إبطاله". وكذلك فعل ماني في قوله: "إن الله قديم عزيز لا يشبهه شيء"، ثم قال: "إن الظلمة قديمة وإن الله مقهور وحزبه مقهورون مأسورون". ومن آمن بمن يكذب نفسه فقد ضلّ ضللاً بعيداً.

تناقضا: 5B: صلعم 4B: صلعم 3B: صلعم 2C and D: يفهم 1B: صلعم



When | we find a consensus of this kind, and we find one such as Islam, 7r  
 we come to know that to accept every consensus is discord, to reject every  
 consensus is error, and consensus alone is not sufficient to confirm prophetic  
 status without the testimonies and marks of truth which God almighty has  
 brought together for the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace). So,  
 one who wishes to know the truth in reports such as these and to discriminate  
 between them must understand the report that he receives and must consider  
 its intention and depth. If he discovers anything in it that contradicts it, or  
 anything accompanying it that falsifies it, he has no need of proof other than  
 this. This is like the report of Musaylima the liar:<sup>23</sup> when he claimed to be  
 a prophet he was asked about the Prophet (may God bless him and give  
 him peace) and he said that he was truthful and he expressed belief in his  
 prophetic status. The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) was  
 asked about him, and he said he was a liar. So, in Musaylima's acknowledgment  
 of truthfulness to the one who said he was a liar is his own acknowledgement  
 of being a liar about his own self, and evidence of his self-contradictoriness  
 and foolishness.<sup>24</sup> For this reason scholars have said that if some false person  
 makes a claim to be a prophet, God will not be slow to make contradiction pass  
 over his tongue to be used against those who say he is truthful, as God caused  
 to pass over the tongues of Zarādušt and Mānī and those like them. For they  
 were inconsistent, they lied and they wavered.

Zarādušt said that Hurmiz<sup>25</sup>—this is the name of the one they wor-  
 shipped—was eternal, compassionate and perfect in knowledge and power,  
 but then he soon described him in the way that weak, ignorant people are  
 described, saying that Satan was begotten from his thought and that God was  
 too weak to destroy him. Mānī did the same thing in saying that God was eter-  
 nal and mighty, and there was nothing like him, and then saying that darkness  
 was eternal and that God was overcome and his supporters were overcome and  
 made captive. Whoever believes in someone who contradicts himself commits  
 a most extraordinary error.

23 Musaylima the liar, as he is habitually called in Muslim sources, was a contemporary of Muḥammad and claimed to be a prophet like him among his tribe of the Banū Ḥanīfa. He met Muḥammad more than once and acknowledged his prophetic status, requesting reciprocal acknowledgement from Muḥammad. After Muḥammad died he boosted his claims, and was killed in 632 by an army sent by Abū Bakr.

24 'Alī's argument is that since Musaylima affirmed that Muḥammad was a true prophet, and Muḥammad affirmed that Musaylima was not a true prophet, Musaylima was affirming that he himself could not be true.

25 A form of the name Ahura Mazda, the supreme Zoroastrian god.

وكذلك النصارى، فإنهم لما قالوا في أول شريعة دينهم: "إنّا نؤمن بالله<sup>1</sup> خالق كل<sup>2</sup> ما يرى وما لا يرى"، ثم أتبعوا قولهم ذلك بأن المسيح خالق غير مخلوق فبدأ<sup>3</sup> التناقض في قولهم. وإذا رجعنا إلى كتب دينهم وجدناها مخالفةً لاعتقادهم، فكلّها تثبت أن الله هو الصانع وما سواه مصنوع. وقد بينت ذلك في الجزء الذي يتلو<sup>4</sup> هذا الجزء، وشرحت فيه ما يلزم أصناف النصارى كلّهم، واحتججت عليهم بمائة وثلاثين حجة من كتب الأنبياء، سوى الحجج البرهانية والأمثال المضروبة والمقاييس الباهرة، وتوخيت بذلك<sup>5</sup> تبصّرهم رشدهم وتأدية ما أوجب الله على بعض الخلق لبعضهم من المحبة والشفقة.

فأمّا ما يلزم اليهود وغيرهم فقد بينت في الجزء الرابع وأوجزت القول فيه ولم أقصر.

فهذا باب لطيف وردّ موجز ونقض يسير غير عسير، وهو أنه إذا ورد على ذي الفهم واللبّ خبر من الأخبار تدبره نغمًا<sup>6</sup> وقلبه ظهراً لبطن، فإن وجد مبطله فيه ومكذّبه معه، أو وجدته مخالفاً لكتب ديانة القوم لم يحتج في تكذيبه وكشف عورته وعواريه إلى غيره. وكان في سرعة وجدان الحقّ شفاء للقلب، كما صنع معاوية برجل من أهل البصرة سأله ألفي جذع لبناء داره. فقال له معاوية: "على كم دارك؟". قال: "على فرسخين في فرسخين". قال: "هي في البصرة أو البصرة فيها؟". قال: "بل هي في البصرة". قال معاوية: "فالبصرة | كلّها أقلّ من فرسخين". فكان في نفس خبره ما يشهد ببطلانه.

<sup>1</sup>B: بأن الله <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>C and D: فبدأ (wrongly). <sup>4</sup>A and B: يتلوا <sup>5</sup>B omits this word.

<sup>6</sup>So in A and B; C and D: نغمًا

The Christians are like this. When they say at the beginning of the law of their faith, 'We believe in God, Creator of all that is visible and invisible', and then follow this statement of theirs with 'Christ is Creator not created', contradiction appears in what they say.<sup>26</sup> If we refer to the books of their religion, we find that they are contrary to their doctrine, for they all confirm that God is the Maker and that everything apart from him is made. I have set this out in the part that follows this, and have explained there what is related to each of the denominations of the Christians and have presented a hundred and thirty arguments against them from the books of the prophets, together with demonstrative arguments, apposite parables and splendid analogies.<sup>27</sup> In this my intention has been to give them clarity of sight, guidance and the fulfilment of the love and compassion that God enjoins on one part of humanity towards another.

7v

Concerning what pertains to the Jews and others beside them, in the fourth part I have set out teaching about it briefly but without any omission.<sup>28</sup>

It is a brief matter, concise rebuttal, a simple and uncomplicated rebuff, that if a man of intelligence and understanding receives any report, he will consider it readily, and will scrutinise it outside and in. And if he discovers something within it that falsifies it and alongside it that contradicts it, or if he discovers that it differs from the books of people's religion, he will have no need of anything else to show it is lying and to reveal its defectiveness and imperfection. To find the truth speedily is healing for the mind. It is like what Mu'āwiya did with a man from the people of Baṣra who asked him for two thousand tree trunks to build his house. Mu'āwiya said to him, 'How big is your house?' He said, 'Two parasangs by two parasangs,' to which he replied, 'Is it within Baṣra or is Baṣra within it?' He said, 'It is indeed within Baṣra,' to which Mu'āwiya said, 'But the whole | of Baṣra is less than two parasangs.' His very report itself contained what shows its falsehood.

8r

26 This is the kind of argument that 'Alī sets out in detail in the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣāra*.

27 The greater part of the rest of the work focuses on Muḥammad and the prophecies about him, and there is nothing about contradictions between Christian beliefs and the Bible, or about what the main Christian sects believed.

28 This evidently formal fourth part of the work cannot be identified. What 'Alī says here about the Jews and above about the Christians appears to suggest that in his actual writing he abandoned his initial plan.

وكالرجل الذي بلغنا أنه قال وهو بالعراق: "لنا<sup>1</sup> بقومس باغ في غربي المدينة على ثلاثمائة فرسخ"، فقال المحدث: "إن كان الخبر حقاً فنحن الساعة في وسط ذلك الباغ، فليس بين قومس والعراق إلا دون ذلك".

ومثل قول الفاخر في كتابه الذي فضّل فيه قحطان على عدنان، فإنه ذكر ابناً لعدّي بن حاتم وقال: "فأين لكم مثله؟" أمره أبوه أن يذود الناس عن وليته فأبى الصبي وقال: "يا أبتى مُرْ بهذا غيري". قال الفاخر: "فهذا جواد ابن جواد ابن جواد ومطبوع ابن مطبوع ابن مطبوع". فوجدتُ هذا الخبر نفسه يكذبُ قوله، وذلك أنّ أبا الصبيّ قد أمره أن يذود الناس عن طعامه، وذلك هو الذي كرهه الصبيّ واستغنى منه، فهو إذًا جواد ابن بخيل، ومطبوع ابن غير مطبوع.

فهكذا فليُفعل من أحبّ تصفية أخبار الأنبياء وتمييزها. فليبحث عن شهادات الحقّ ومقاييس العبر التي وجدتها متوافرة مجتمعة للنبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>2</sup> في عشرة معانٍ لم يجتمع مثلها لأحد قطّ إلاّ للمسيح عليه السلام. وأنا مفسّر ذلك وكاشفه<sup>3</sup> للعيان<sup>4</sup> ليُعلم الناظر فيه أنّ من كنّ تلك الانحصال معه ووجدن له وجبت له النبوة، ولزمت حجة الله البالغة من كفر به.

8v أولها: دعاؤه صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup> إلى الفرد الدائم العلام العدل<sup>6</sup> الذي لا يغالب | ولا يُعارض<sup>7</sup> وموافقته في ذلك جميع الأنبياء.

<sup>1</sup>So in B; it appears to have been mistakenly corrected to: كَا in A; C and D: كَا, based on this correction (cf. footnotes therein). <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>B: وكاشف <sup>4</sup>C and D: للأعيان (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>B:

يجار: <sup>7</sup>So in B; A, C and D: العادل <sup>6</sup>C and D: صلعم

It is like a man in Iraq who, we heard, said, 'We have an orchard in Qūmis<sup>29</sup> three hundred parasangs to the west of the town.' The person who was told this said, 'If the report is right then we are now in the middle of this orchard, because between Qūmis and Iraq is not so far as this.'

It is similar to the words of al-Fākhir in his book in which he prefers Qaḥṭān to 'Adnān.<sup>30</sup> For he refers to a son of 'Adī ibn Ḥātim<sup>31</sup> and says, 'Where will you have one like him? His father ordered him to chase people away from his feast, but the boy refused and said, "My father, order someone else to do this, not me."' Al-Fākhir said, 'This is a generous son of a generous son, one stamped with the character of a son stamped with the character of a son stamped with character.' I find that this very report proves his statement wrong for the reason that the boy's father ordered him to chase the people from his meal, and this is what the boy found disagreeable and asked to be excused from doing. So he was the generous son of a miser, someone stamped with character and son of one with no character.

Anyone who wishes to clarify and distinguish the reports of the prophets should do the same. He might inquire into the testimonies to truth and measurements of consequence for the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), which I have found are numerous and can be brought together according to ten characteristics, the like of which cannot be brought together for anyone at all except Christ (peace be upon him). I will interpret this and disclose it with clarity so that anyone inquiring into it will know that the one who has these qualities in his possession must have prophetic status, and the one who disbelieves in him is faced with a serious plea before God.

The first of these is his praying (may God bless him and give him peace) to the unique, everlasting, all-knowing and just One who is not overcome | or opposed,<sup>32</sup> and his conformity to all the prophets in this. 8v

29 A province in Islamic Persia.

30 In its comparison of the southern and northern Arabian tribes, this otherwise unknown author's book (assuming this is a personal name) is maybe reminiscent of such works as Ibn al-Kalbī's (d. c. 821) *Jamharat al-nasab*. Both the author and the work must have been well known to 'Alī's intended audience.

31 'Adī ibn Ḥātim ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'd al-Ṭā'ī became a Muslim towards the end of the Prophet's life, and transmitted a number of Ḥadīths from him. He was a prominent supporter of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and fought on his side at the Battles of the Camel and Ṣiffīn. He died in Kūfa in about 687 at a very great age.

32 The reading followed here, *yū'āraḍu*, is that given in MS B, against the reading *yujāru*, given in MS A and followed in the editions of Mingana and Nuwayhiḍ. It is one of a few instances of the later copyist changing the text of the original.

الثاني: ما كان عليه في نسكه وعفته وصدقه ومحمود سننه وشرائعه.

الثالث: أنه عليه السلام أظهر آيات بينات لا يأتي بها إلا أنبياء الله ونجباؤه.<sup>1</sup>

الرابع: أنه تنبأ على أشياء غائبة عنه فصحت في زمانه.

الخامس: أنه تنبأ على حوادث جمّة من حوادث الدنيا ودولها صحت بعده.

السادس: في أن الكتاب الذي جاء به آية من آيات النبوة بالضرورة وبالحجج التي لا تدفع.

السابع: أن غلبته الأمم آية بينة بالضرورة والحجج التي لا تدفع.<sup>2</sup>

الثامن: أن دعائه الذين نقلوا أخباره خيار الناس وأبرارهم ومن لا يُظنّ بأمثالهم الأكاذيب والإفك.

التاسع: في أنه عليه السلام خاتم الأنبياء وأنه لو لم يُبعث لبطلت نبوّات الأنبياء فيه وفي اسماعيل عليهما السلام.

العاشر: أن الأنبياء عليهم السلام قد تنبأت<sup>3</sup> عليه قبل ظهوره بدهر طويل ووصفت<sup>4</sup> مبعثه وبلده ومسيره وخضوع الأمم له والملوك لأمرته.

فهذه خصال نيرة وشواهد كافية من أدلى بها ووجبت له فاز قدحه وأفلح حقّه ووجب تصديقه، ومن ردّها ومجدها خاب سعيه وخسر دنياه وآخرته. وأنا ملخص ذلك باباً باباً، ومستشهد عليه الأنبياء وغير مقتصر فيه على نبي واحد بل

<sup>1</sup>C and D: ونجباؤه <sup>2</sup>This sentence containing the seventh characteristic is lacking in B. <sup>3</sup>So in

A, B and C; D: تنبأوا <sup>4</sup>So in A and B; C and D: ووصفوا

The second is what he possessed of piety, asceticism and sincerity, and the praiseworthiness of his ways and his laws.

The third is that he (peace be upon him) manifested clear signs that only the prophets and noble ones of God produce.

The fourth is that he foretold things that were hidden from him but were fulfilled in his time.

The fifth is that he predicted numerous events happening in the world and its empires that were fulfilled after him.

The sixth is that the book which he delivered is by necessity and undeniable arguments a sign of prophetic status.

The seventh is that his victory over the nations is by necessity and undeniable arguments a clear sign.

The eighth is that his missionaries who conveyed his reports were the first and most godly of people, to whose like lies and untruth could not be imputed.

The ninth is that he (peace be upon him) was the Seal of the Prophets,<sup>33</sup> and that if he had not been sent the prophecies of the prophets about him and Ishmael (peace be upon them) would have proved false.

The tenth is that the prophets (peace be upon them) had prophesied about him a long time before his appearance, describing his sending, his homeland and his career, and the submission of communities to him and of kings to his community.

These are luminous qualities and sufficient testimonies, that whoever displays them and they refer to him, his arrow will achieve its goal, his truth will succeed, and belief in him will be mandatory. Whoever rejects them and repudiates them will have his course run out, and his existence here and in the hereafter lost. I will present the nub of this point by point, and will cite the witnesses of the prophets about it. I will not limit myself in this to a single prophet

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33 Q 33:40.

9r على جماعة، ولا على نبوة واحدة، بل على ستين نبوة أو تزيد. وأقدم ما أرجوا أن يجعل الله فيه تقريراً وتقريعاً ومخرجاً من العمى لمن لم يكن جباراً عتياً ولا غوياً شقيماً. وهواناً إذا سألنا النصارى خاصة عن علة تكذيبهم بالنبي عليه السلام، قالوا: "إن ذلك لثلاث خصال:

أولاهن: إننا لم نجد أحداً من الأنبياء تنبأ عليه قبل مجيئه.

والثانية: إننا ما<sup>2</sup> نجد في القرآن ذكر آية ولا نبوة لمن جاء به.

والثالثة: أن المسيح أنبأنا أنه لا نبي بعده.

فهذه أقوى ما يحتجون به عندهم، وأنا مُطلق ذلك بتوفيق الله، فإذا قررت عندهم أن الأمر على خلاف ما قالوا<sup>3</sup> وأنه<sup>4</sup> لا<sup>5</sup> حاجة في تصديق الأنبياء إلى ما ذكروا، لم يبق لهم عذر فيما بين الله وبينهم. وكان المتعل بتلك الحجج المتعلقة بها على سبيل فتنة وهلاك.

جواب قولهم إنه لم يتنبأ عليه نبي أنه إن<sup>6</sup> كانت نبوة الأنبياء لا تثبت ولا يجب قبولها إلا بتقدم النبوات عليها، فإن من صدق بنبي من الأنبياء لم نتقدمه نبوة نبي عليه فقد ضلّ وفتن. فليخبرونا عن موسى النبي نفسه صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>7</sup> من الذي كان تنبأ عليه أو على داود أو أشعيا أو أرميا وهم عندهم من أفاضل الأنبياء عليهم السلام ولا نبوة متقدمة عليهم، فمن آمن بهم إذا<sup>8</sup> فقد خالف الحق إلى الباطل بقبوله إياهم وباء بسخط من رب العالمين.

<sup>1</sup>A: أرجوا: <sup>2</sup>So in A and B; C and D: لم <sup>3</sup>B: ذلك <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B: ولا <sup>6</sup>B omits this

word. <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>C and D omit this word.



but to a number, nor to a single prophecy but to sixty or more | prophecies.<sup>34</sup> 9r  
 My foremost desire is that God will make it encouraging and chiding, and a way out of blindness for anyone who is not proud or haughty, not misguided or malicious.

But if we ask the Christians in particular what is their reason for denying the Prophet (peace be upon him), they say: This is for three reasons: the first is that we have not found that any of the prophets prophesied about him before his coming; the second is that we do not find in the Qur'an mention of a miracle or of a prophecy of the one who delivered it; and the third is that Christ informed us that there would be no prophets after him.<sup>35</sup> These are the strongest arguments they have for this, and with the help of God I will undo it. For if I can establish before them that the situation is contrary to what they say and that there is no need of what they say in order to believe the prophets, no excuse will be left to them in what is between God and themselves, and the one who keeps on using these pretexts and clutching onto them will be on the path to conflict and ruin.

The response to their statement that no prophet has prophesied about him is that if the prophetic status of the prophets is only to be confirmed and can only be accepted by earlier prophecies about it, so that whoever believed in any prophet who was not preceded by the prophecy of a prophet about him would be in error and conflict, then let them tell us about the person of the prophet Moses (may God bless him and give him peace), who was it prophesied about him, or about David, Isaiah or Jeremiah? In their eyes these are among the supreme prophets (peace be upon them), although there was no previous prophecy about them. So whoever believes in them has abandoned truth for falsehood by his acceptance of them and has drawn upon himself the wrath of the Lord of the worlds.

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34 He has just referred to these prophecies numbering 130.

35 Cf. Matthew 24:24, where Jesus warns against prophetic claimants coming after him.

فأما جواب قولهم إنه ليس في القرآن ذكر آية للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>1</sup> وإن من<sup>2</sup> لم يكن في كتابه ذكر آية ونبوة لم يجب التصديق به، فليخبرونا عن الآية<sup>3</sup> الموجودة لداود النبي في زبورته، فإن لم يوجدنا ذلك، فلم وبأية حجة سموه نبياً ولم يتنبأ عليه نبي قبله، ولا وُجد في كتابه ذكر آية؟

فقد بان مما شرحت، أنه لا حاجة في تصحيح خبر الأنبياء إلى نبوة متقدمة عليهم ولا إلى أن يكون ذكر آياتهم وإعلام براهينهم مقيدة في كتبهم. فقد كان من الأنبياء من له آية مذكورة ونبوة ناطقة في كتابه، لكنه لم يتنبأ عليه نبي قبله كما قد بينا آنفاً، فلم يدفع بذلك حقه مثل موسى ودانيال وأشعيا ونظرائهم عليهم السلام. وكان منهم من جمع الله له ذلك كله مثل المسيح عليه السلام، فإنه أظهر آيات باهرات، وتنبأ على الغائبات المستورات، وتظاهرت عليه نبوات قبل ظهوره. وكان منهم من له آية<sup>4</sup> وليست له نبوة مذكورة في كتابه مثل اليسع فإنه أحيى ميتين ولم يتنبأ نبوة رأساً، ومنهم مثل حزقيال النبي ويوشاع وذويهما ممن لم يكن له آية وكانت لهم نبوة،<sup>5</sup> لكن<sup>6</sup> نبوته التي تنبأ بها إنما صحّت بعد دهر طويل، فلا حجة له فيها على من شاهده ولا لمن قبله حجة في تصديقه إياه من غير آية أظهرها لأهل زمانه. ومنهم من لم تكن له آية ولا نبوة ولا خبر مقنع في كتابه وهو معدود في زمرة الأنبياء مثل مالاخي وحجي وناحوم. وإنما كتّاب النبي منهم في ثلاث ورقات أو أربع فقط. ومنهم | مريم النبية أخت موسى، وحنة النبية، فإن هاتين خاصّة، ليس لهما كتاب، ولا نبوة، ولا آية، ولا دلالة، وقد عدّوهما في الأنبياء.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: بالآية <sup>4</sup>B: آيات <sup>5</sup>B:

ولكن <sup>6</sup>C and D: نبوات

An answer to what they say that there is no mention in the Qur'ān of a miracle of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), | and that one who does not have in his book any mention of a miracle or prophecy should not be trusted, then let them tell us about the miracle belonging to the prophet David in his Psalms. If they cannot provide this for us, then why and on what pretext do they call him a prophet when no prophet before him foretold him and there is no mention of a miracle in his book? 9v

It must be clear from what I have explained that in the verification of the report about prophets there is no need for a preceding prophecy about them, or for there to be mention of their miracles or signs set down in their books in order to prove them. Among the prophets there have been those with a sign mentioned and prophecy expressed in their books although no prophet before them has foretold them, as we have made clear above, and this has not been a reason to set aside the truth about them. Such are Moses, Daniel, Isaiah and the like (peace be upon them). Among them are those for whom God joined everything together, such as Christ (peace be upon him), for he performed dazzling miracles and foretold hidden and concealed matters, and prophecies about him were manifested before his appearance. Among them were those who possessed a miracle, but there was no prophecy of theirs mentioned in their book, such as Elisha: he revived two dead people,<sup>36</sup> but he made no prophetic utterance of a direct kind. Among them were such as Ezekiel the prophet, Hosea and the like of them, who did not possess any miracle but did possess prophecy, although their prophecy which they uttered was only fulfilled after a long interval, there thus being no proof about him in it for those who actually saw him, and among those who were before him no evidence to prove him trustworthy for them without a miracle which he could perform for the people of his time. Among them were those who possessed neither miracle nor prophecy, nor convincing reports in his book, although they are numbered among the company of prophets, such as Malachi, Haggai and Nahum, whose prophetic books are only three or four pages. Among them | are the prophetess Miriam, sister of Moses,<sup>37</sup> and the prophetess Hannah,<sup>38</sup> neither of whom in particular possessed a book, prophecy, miracle or sign, although they have included them among the prophets. 10r

36 2 Kings 4:18–37; 2 Kings 13:20–21.

37 Exodus 15:20–21.

38 The mother of Samuel, 1 Samuel 1.1–2:10.

فكيف وبأي حجة يا بني عمي سميتم هؤلاء أنبياء، وهذه<sup>1</sup> حالهم؟ ولم كفرتم<sup>2</sup> بنبوّة النبي عليه السلام وله تلك الخصال المعدودة التي بعضها مغلّدة<sup>3</sup> في القرآن، وبعضها في الآثار التي تقوم مقام القرآن، وأنّ فيما في القرآن منها أوكّد حجة وأوضح محجة وأصدق نبوة؟ فكيف ومعها ما أنا موضحه من نبوّات الأنبياء البررة عليه وإشارة<sup>4</sup> أكثرهم إلى نبوته وزمانه عليهم جميعاً سلام الله وبركاته؟

فإن قلت: "إنّا نافرنا النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup> وجانبناه لأنّه لا نبيّ بعد المسيح" أوضحت لكم من كتبكم أنّ من نفث ذلك في أسماعكم وأجراه على ألسنتكم غير ناصح لكم بل غاشّ ولا موثوق به بل متهم. فمن ذلك ما في كتاب فراكسيس، وهو رسائل الحواريين، في الفصل الحادي عشر أنّه قدّم في تلك الأيام أنبياء من بيت المقدس وقام أحدهم<sup>6</sup> وكان<sup>7</sup> يُسمّى أغابوس فتنبأ لهم وقال إنّ سيكون في هذه البلاد مجاعة وقط شديد. وقال في هذا الفصل إنّ كان في بيعة أنطاكية أنبياء وعلماء منهم برنابا وشمعون ولوقیوس من مدينة قورينا ومانايل وشاول. وهؤلاء<sup>8</sup> الخمسة من الأنبياء بأنطاكية فيما ذكر. فأما<sup>9</sup> متنبّات النساء فذكره أيضاً. قال في الفصل التاسع عشر من هذا الكتاب: "إنّه كان لفيلفوس المفسّر أربع بنات متنبّات". وقال لوقا في كتاب فراكسيس: "إنّ نفر<sup>10</sup> المتوجهين إلى أنطاكية كان نزولهم على بيت يهوذا وشيلا"، لأنهم كانوا أيضاً أنبياء. فهذا باب منقطع وقول قد هذرو حجج لهم قد انحلت وانفسخت. ووضح بأنّ قد كان بعد المسيح قوم يسمّونهم رسلاً وأنبياء مثل فولس نفسه.

<sup>1</sup>B, صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: وإشارات <sup>3</sup>C and D: مغلّدة <sup>4</sup>C and D: (wrongly). كفرهم <sup>5</sup>C and D: هذه <sup>6</sup>B,

الزمر <sup>7</sup>C and D: ومن <sup>8</sup>B: فكان <sup>9</sup>C and D: (wrongly). <sup>10</sup>C and D: أحد منهم <sup>10</sup>B: أحد منهم

My dear cousins, why and on what evidence have you called these individuals prophets, if this is their status, and why do you not believe in the prophetic status of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who had all these qualities enumerated, some of them eternally fixed in the Qurʾān, and some in the traditions<sup>39</sup> which are equivalent to the Qurʾān, although the ones that are in the Qurʾān are more certain as evidence, are clearer for the formulation of proof, and are more trustworthy as prophecy? How can it be, when there are the prophecies of the godly prophets about him that I am going to make clear, and the indication of most of them to his prophetic status and his time (God's blessing and benediction be upon them all)?

If you say, 'We dissociate ourselves from the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and will have nothing to do with him, because there is no prophet after Christ', I will make clear to you from your books that the one who breathed this into your ears and caused it to come from your tongues was not being sincere to you but deceitful, not reliable but uncertain. This kind of thing is what is written in the Book of the Acts, which is the letters of the Apostles,<sup>40</sup> in chapter 11: 'In those days prophets came from Jerusalem, and one of them who was named Agabus stood up and prophesied to them saying, "In this country there will be a famine and severe drought."' <sup>41</sup> It says in this chapter that in the church of Antioch there were prophets and wise men, among them Barnabas, Simon and Lucius of the town of Cyrene, and Manaël and Saul.<sup>42</sup> These five were among the prophets in Antioch, according to what is related. Prophetesses are also mentioned: in chapter 19 | of this book it says: 'Philip the interpreter had four daughters who were prophetesses.'<sup>43</sup> And in the Book of the Acts, Luke<sup>44</sup> says that the group making their way to Antioch arrived at the house of Judas and Silas because they too were prophets.<sup>45</sup> So this point has no force, talk about it is quite nonsensical, and the arguments in their favour are slack and without conviction. For it is clear that after Christ there were people whom they called apostles and prophets, such as Paul himself.

10v

39 'Alī uses the term *āthār*, even though he evidently has in mind prophetic *Ḥadīths*.

40 'Alī uses the qurʾānic term *ḥawārīyyīn* for the Apostles.

41 Acts 11:27–28.

42 Acts 13:1, giving the name of the fourth as Manaen.

43 Acts 21:9, where Philip is called 'evangelist' (Arabic *mubashshir*) rather than interpreter (*mufasssir*), suggesting a copyist's error here.

44 See Acts 1:1, and cf. Luke 1:1.

45 Acts 15:30–32, making no mention of the group going to the house of Judas and Silas. Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 18, n. 4, explains this as the result of an over-literal translation of the Syriac *dibāith* as 'house', though here it means 'companions'.

وأنا مفسّر تلك الخصال العشر التي فسرتها بعون الله وتوفيقه، ومقدّم في كلّ باب ما هو مخدّد في القرآن، تويحاً لمن زعم أنّه ليس في القرآن ذكر آية، وتوخيّاً لأنّ يعلم الناظر في هذا الكتاب فضله ومزيّة قدره، وأنّ الذين ولدوا على الفطرة، ورسخوا في الإسلام، وأطنبوا في هذا الباب لم يبلغوا منه إلّا دون ما بلغت. فنّ اختلج في صدره<sup>1</sup> شكّ فليَقَسْ ككّابي هذا وما فيه من النبوّات والمجج التامّات الشافيات، وما تتبّع من قلائد القوم ومعاناتهم<sup>2</sup> بجميع ما ألّفه المؤلّفون منه<sup>3</sup> منذ ظهر الإسلام إلى زماننا هذا، وذلك بتوفيق الله وعونه وبركة أمير المؤمنين أيّده الله، وما يوجب الله فيه لأوليائه ومواليه. فهو الذي بعثني عليه، مدّ الله في عمره وسدّدني له، وعرّضني لعظيم الأجر وجميل الذكر فيه. وكنت من قبل أنّ أسلم غافلاً عنه، هاتماً لا أبصر رشداً ولا أهتدي لشيء ممّا انكشف لي من بعد، ولله المنّ والحمد، فلقد رفع الحجب عن الأبصار وفتح الأقفال وأخرج من ظلمات الضلال.

<sup>1</sup>B: خلده. <sup>2</sup>C and D: معاياتهم (wrongly). <sup>3</sup>B omits this word.

With God's help and assistance, I will explain these ten characteristics which I have outlined, and on every point I shall present the report that is eternally fixed in the Qur'ān as a reproach to anyone who claims there is no mention of a miracle in the Qur'ān, and with the purpose that anyone consulting this book may know its superiority and the excellence of its worth. Those who were born in the faith and know Islam intimately, and have lavished much attention on this point, have not succeeded in it nearly as much as I have. Let him in whose heart is the stirring of doubt compare this book of mine and the prophecies and full and satisfactory arguments in it, and also the convolutions and falterings of people I have scrutinised, with all that authors have written on it from the advent of Islam to our own time. This is by the assistance and help of God, and the blessing of the Commander of the Faithful (may God support him), and as a duty which God imposes through him on his friends and associates. He it was (may God prolong his life) who prompted me to do it, guided me to it, and intimated to me the high reward and attractive renown that lay in it. Before becoming a Muslim I was careless about it and mystified by it, not being aware of guidance or led to any of the things that were later revealed to me. Grace and praise be to God! For he has removed | the veil from sight, he has opened the locks, he has given liberation from the darkness of delusion. 11r

## الباب الأوّل

في توحيده عليه السلام ودعائه إلى ما دعا  
إليه إبراهيم وجميع الأنبياء عليهم السلام

فأصحّ الشهود على ذلك القرآن، فإنّه ينطق بأنّ دعاء النبيّ عليه السلام لم يكن إلّا إلى<sup>1</sup> إله<sup>2</sup> إبراهيم وإسماعيل واستحقّ ويعقوب وإلى التوحيد المجرد<sup>3</sup> وإلى ما دعت إليه الأنبياء البررة ودلّت عليه العقول الصحيحة.

فمن ذلك قول الله تعالى في القرآن: ﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ، اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ، لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ، لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾. وقال: ﴿شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَانِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾. وقال: ﴿قُلْ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعْزِزُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾. وقال: ﴿كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾.

وقال في فضل الله ورحمته وعدله: ﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ﴾. وقال: ﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ﴾. وقال: ﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ﴾<sup>4</sup>. وقال: ﴿مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ﴾. وقال: ﴿لَا يَكْفُفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وَسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ﴾.

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<sup>1</sup>This word is added in the same hand in the margin in A. <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>This word,

which is illegible in A, is supplied from B; it is lacking in C and D. <sup>4</sup>This verse is lacking in B.



**On his declaration of God's unity (peace be upon him)  
and his call to the call made by Abraham and all the prophets (peace be  
upon them)**

The most authentic of the witnesses to this is the Qur'ān. It states that the Prophet's (peace be upon him) call was none other than to the God of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, to the absolute oneness of God and to what the pure prophets called and sound intellects demonstrated.

Of such are the utterances of God almighty in the Qur'ān: 'Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally besought of all! He begetteth not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him';<sup>46</sup> his words: 'Allah is witness that there is no God save Him, and the angels and the men of learning, maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God save Him, the almighty, the wise';<sup>47</sup> his words: 'Say: O Allah! Owner of sovereignty! Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo! Thou art able to do all things';<sup>48</sup> his words: 'How disbelieve ye in Allah when ye were dead and He gave life to you! Then He will give you death, then life again, and then unto Him ye will return'.<sup>49</sup>

About God's excellence, mercy and justice he said: 'Whoso doeth right it is for his soul, and whoso doeth wrong it is against it. And thy Lord is not at all a tyrant to His slaves';<sup>50</sup> his words: 'And whoso scoreth a good deed We add unto it good for him. Lo! Allah is forgiving, responsive';<sup>51</sup> his words: 'And whoso doeth good an atom's weight will see it then, and whoso doeth | ill an atom's weight will see it then';<sup>52</sup> his words: 'Whatever of good befalleth thee it is from Allah, and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself';<sup>53</sup> his words: 'Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope. For it (is only) that which it hath earned, and against it that which it hath deserved'.<sup>54</sup>

11V

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46 Q 112.

47 Q 3:18.

48 Q 3:26.

49 Q 2:28.

50 Q 41:46.

51 Q 42:23.

52 Q 99:7-8.

53 Q 4:79.

54 Q 2:286.

وقال يعدد فضل الله ورأفته بعباده: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ  
 حَسَنَةً يَضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مَنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾. وقال: ﴿وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ  
 كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ﴾. وقال: ﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي  
 الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾. وقال: ﴿ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا  
 يَفْقَهُونَ﴾. وقال: ﴿مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ مَثَالٍهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى  
 إِلَّا مِثْلُهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ﴾. وقال: ﴿فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جُمِعْنَا لَهُمْ لَيَوْمَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ  
 كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ﴾.<sup>1</sup>

فهذا هو إيمان آدم ونوح وإبراهيم وجميع الأنبياء والأصفياء صلوات الله<sup>2</sup> عليهم  
 لا يشكون فيه ولا يمترون.

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit: وهم لا يظلمون (wrongly). <sup>2</sup>This word is added in the same hand below the line

in A.

Enumerating God's excellence and graciousness to his servants, he said: 'Lo! Allah wrongeth not even the weight of an atom; and if there is a good deed He will double it and will give from His presence an immense reward';<sup>55</sup> his words: 'We wronged them not, but they did wrong themselves';<sup>56</sup> his words: 'So when they went astray Allah sent their hearts astray. And Allah guideth not the evil-living folk';<sup>57</sup> his words: 'That is because they believed, then disbelieved, therefore their hearts are sealed so that they understand not';<sup>58</sup> his words: 'Whoso bringeth a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof, while whoso bringeth an ill-deed will be awarded but the like thereof; and they will not be wronged';<sup>59</sup> and his words: 'How (will it be) when We have brought them all together to a Day of which there is no doubt, when every soul will be paid in full what it hath earned?''<sup>60</sup>

This is the faith of Adam, Noah, Abraham and all the prophets and chosen ones (may God's blessings be upon them). They have no misgiving about it and no doubt.<sup>61</sup>

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55 Q 4:40.

56 Q 11:101.

57 Q 61:5.

58 Q 63:3.

59 Q 6:160.

60 Q 3:25.

61 It cannot be a coincidence that in this section the emphasis is placed on divine unity and human responsibility as a consequence of God's justice. These correspond directly to the two main theological principles of the Mu'tazila, showing the strength of their influence at this time even among people who would not necessarily be active supporters of their views.

## الباب الثاني

### في فضائل سننه وشرائعه

فأمّا أموره وشرائع دينه، فحبّ الله تعالى، وحبّ الوالدين، وصلة الرحم، والجود بالمصون، والبذل للماعون، والزهد في الدنيا، والصوم والصلاة والصدقة والزكاة، والعفو عن المذنب، والوفاء بالعهد، ومجانبة الغدر والكذب، ودفع السيئة بالتي<sup>1</sup> هي أحسن، وتحريم المسكر<sup>2</sup> والفجور والزنا والربا، والأمر بإفشاء السلام والطعام،<sup>3</sup> وضرب هام الكفرة الطغام، وغير ذلك من الأمور التي لا يقوم<sup>4</sup> دين ولا دنيا إلّا بها.<sup>5</sup>

12r

من ذلك قول الله عزّ وجلّ: ﴿الذين ينفقون في السراء والضراء والكاظمين الغيظ والعافين عن الناس والله يحبّ المحسنين﴾. وقوله: ﴿الذين ينفقون أموالهم بالليل والنهار سرّاً وعلانيةً فلهم أجرهم عند ربّهم ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون﴾. وقال: ﴿خذ العفو وأمر بالعرف وأعرض عن الجاهلين. وإما ينزغنك من الشيطان نزغ فاستعذ بالله، إنه هو السميع العليم﴾.<sup>6</sup> وقال: ﴿ولا تصاعر<sup>7</sup> خدك للناس ولا تمش في الأرض مرحاً، إنّ الله لا يحبّ كل مختال فخور. واقصد في مشيك واغضض من صوتك إنّ أنكر الأصوات لصوت الحمير﴾. وقال: ﴿لا يؤاخذكم الله باللغو في أيمانكم ولكن يؤاخذكم بما كسبت قلوبكم﴾. وقال: ﴿قل لا أملك لنفسي ضراً ولا نفعاً إلّا ما شاء الله﴾. وقال: ﴿يريد الله بكم اليسر ولا يريد بكم العسر﴾. وقال: ﴿إنّ المسلمين والمسلمات والمؤمنين والمؤمنات

<sup>1</sup>B: التي <sup>2</sup>C and D: السكر <sup>3</sup>C and D: والمقام <sup>4</sup>C and D: تقويم <sup>5</sup>Reading with B; A: به <sup>6</sup>So in A

and B; cf. Q 7:200 (إنه سميع عليم). <sup>7</sup>So in A and B; cf. Q 31:18 (تصعر).

## On the excellences of his customs and regulations

His injunctions and the regulations of his religion were: love of God almighty; love of parents; ties of relationship; generosity with possessions; free offering of common kindnesses; abstinence in the world, fasting, prayer, voluntary giving, alms; pardon for the culprit; fulfilment of a vow; avoidance of treachery and lying; driving away evil by the means that are best; condemning intoxication, debauchery, adultery and usury; commanding the distribution of well-being and nourishment; | striking the heads of common unbelievers, and other injunctions without which neither religion nor world can stand.

121

Concerning this are the words of God, great and mighty: ‘Those who spend in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind; Allah loveth the good’;<sup>62</sup> his words: ‘Those who spend their wealth by night and day, by stealth and openly, verily their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve’;<sup>63</sup> his words: ‘Keep to forgiveness, and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant. And if a slander from the devil wound thee, then seek refuge in Allah. Lo! He is hearer, knower’;<sup>64</sup> his words: ‘Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk, nor walk with pertness in the land. Lo! Allah loveth not each braggart boaster. Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo! the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass’;<sup>65</sup> his words: ‘Allah will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths. But He will take you to task for that which your hearts have garnered’;<sup>66</sup> his words: ‘Say: I have no power to hurt or benefit myself, save that which Allah willeth’;<sup>67</sup> his words: ‘Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you’;<sup>68</sup> his words: ‘Lo! men who surrender unto Allah, and women

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62 Q 3:134.

63 Q 2:274.

64 Q 7:199–200.

65 Q 31:18–19.

66 Q 2:225.

67 Q 10:49.

68 Q 2:185.

والقاتنين<sup>1</sup> والقائتات والصادقين والصادقات والصابرين والصابرات والخالشعين والخالشعات والمتصدقين والمتصدقات<sup>2</sup> والصائمين والصائمات والحافظين فروجهم والحافظات والذاكرين الله كثيراً والذاكرات أعد الله لهم مغفرة وأجرًا عظيمًا. <sup>12V</sup> إِنْ قَالَ: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ﴾، يعظكم لعلكم تذكرون. <sup>12V</sup> وَقَالَ: ﴿وَلَا تَطْغَ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ، هَمَّازٌ مَّشَاءٌ بَنِيمٍ مَّنَّاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ، عُتْلٌ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٍ﴾.

فماترك أمرًا مقومًا<sup>3</sup> مصلحًا لعباده وموعظة جامعة لمرضاته إلّا وقد نطق به. ومن فضيلة<sup>4</sup> دعوته عليه السلام أنه عمّ الناس كلّهم بالدعاء ولم يدعهم إلّا<sup>5</sup> للتقوى<sup>6</sup> ولا خصّ بها طائفة دون أخرى كما فعل سائر الأنبياء ما خلا المسيح عليه السلام، فإنه عمّ بالدعوة ووعد بالغفران والجنة، فأما الباقيون فإنهم كانوا يخبطون من حولهم بالسيف خبطًا وينتسفون أموالهم انتسافًا من غير دعاء ولا إبقاء<sup>7</sup> ولا إعدار ولا إنذار، كما أمر به<sup>8</sup> النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>9</sup>.

فأما زهد النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>10</sup> وتورّعه واستخفافه بزخارف الدنيا وغرورها، فإنّي ذاكر منه ما يستدلّ به على أنّ من كان في مثل تألّه وعفافه لم يُظنّ به الاختراع والبطل. فإنه روي عنه عليه السلام أنه لم يشبع من خبز ولا لحم إلّا على ضيق وشدة. وأنه صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>11</sup> زوج ابنته فاطمة من علي رضوان<sup>12</sup> الله عليهما فكان ما جهّزها به سرير مزمل<sup>13</sup> بشريط ووسادة من آدم

<sup>1</sup>This word is added in the same hand in the margin of A. <sup>2</sup>C: المتصدقات <sup>3</sup>C and D: مقويًا

(wrongly). <sup>4</sup>B: فضله <sup>5</sup>So in B; this word is lacking in A. <sup>6</sup>C and D: التقوى, which does not

seem to offer any meaningful sense. <sup>7</sup>B: وإبقاء <sup>8</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>9</sup>B: صلعم <sup>10</sup>B:

مرمل <sup>11</sup>B: صلعم <sup>12</sup>B: رضي <sup>13</sup>So in A and B; C and D: مرمل

who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember—Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward’;<sup>69</sup> | his words: ‘Lo! Allah enjoineth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you in order that ye may take heed’;<sup>70</sup> and his words: ‘Neither obey thou each feeble oath-monger, detractor, spreader abroad of slanders, hinderer of the good, transgressor, malefactor, greedy therewithal, intrusive’.<sup>71</sup>

12V

He did not omit any matter that would be correcting or reforming to his servants nor any counsel that would encompass his own good will without speaking about it.<sup>72</sup> The excellence of his summons (peace be upon him) is shown in his extending the call to all people and calling them only to piety, and not singling out one group against another, as all the other prophets did apart from Christ (peace be upon him), who made the summons and the promise of forgiveness and paradise open to all. But the others tended to aim sword blows at whoever was around them and to scatter their fortunes without calling, preserving, justifying or admonishing, as the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) was commanded to do.

Concerning the Prophet’s abstinence, self-denial and contempt for the vanities and trifles of the world (may God bless him and give him peace), I will mention things about it which prove conclusively that one with such godliness and piety as him cannot be suspected of fabrication and falseness. It is related about him (peace be upon him) that he only ever ate bread and meat under pressure and constraint.<sup>73</sup> He (may God bless him and give him peace) married his daughter Fāṭima to ‘Alī (may God’s favour be upon them both), and was only able to provide her with a bed woven from palm fronds, a leather pil-

69 Q 33:35.

70 Q 16:90.

71 Q 68:10–13.

72 The sense of this sentence requires some pronouns to refer to God and some to Muḥammad.

73 Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-shamā’il al-Muḥammadiyya*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/1803490>; Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/2, pp. 113–120 (examples of the harsh life led by Muḥammad; M).

حشوها ليف وقدر وقربة وسلّة فيها شيء من زبيب وتمر.<sup>1</sup> وأن عائشة رضي الله عنها كانت تقول: "إن كُنّا لنمكث أربعين يوماً ما لنا مصباح"، قيل لها: "ففيما كنتم تعيشون؟" قالت: "بالأسودين الماء والتمر".

وأنّ فاطمة عليها السلام كانت تطحن الطحين بنفسها حتى نحتت<sup>2</sup> يداها ورئي أثر قطب الرحي في يديها، وأنّها شكت ذلك إلى النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> وسألته خادماً يخدمها فقال لها: "إي بنية ما عندي ما يسع نساء المسلمين كلّهن وأنت امرأة منهن، فاكثري ذكر الله وشكره". وكان عليه السلام كثيراً ما يشدّ الحجر بلبت<sup>4</sup> على بطنه جوعاً، ويأكل إذا أكل على الأرض، ويتوسّد يده إذا نام، ويلبس العباء ويقول: "أنا عبد آكل وأنام مثل العبد<sup>5</sup>". وأنّه كان صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>6</sup> إذا صلى سُمع له أزيز كأزيز المرجل من البكاء، والأزيز غليان الجوف كأنّه ضرس<sup>7</sup> المرجل.

ومّا روي عنه عليه السلام<sup>8</sup> من مكارم الأخلاق ومعالي الأمور، أنّ جبريل عليه السلام أتاه فقال له: "يا محمد جئتكم بمكارم أخلاق الدنيا والآخرة وهي أنّ تصل من قطعك، وتعطي من حرمك، وتعفو عمن ظلمك". وقال: "عودوا المرضى، وأطعموا الجياع، وفكّوا العنّة" يعني الأسرى. ومنه نهيه صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>9</sup> عن قيل وقال، وكثرة السؤال وإضاعة المال. وقال عليه السلام<sup>10</sup> وهو يأمر بالقصد والقنوع: "إنّ روح القدس نفث في روعي أنّ نفساً لن تموت حتى تستكمل رزقها". وقال: "إنّ عائداً المرضى على مخارف الجنّة والمخارف جني النخل". وقال

<sup>1</sup>D: ومن تمر <sup>2</sup>C and D: غدت <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>This word is added in a different hand above the

line in A. <sup>5</sup>B: العبيد <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>So in A and B; C and D: صرير <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: صلعم <sup>10</sup>B

عليه السلام omits:



low stuffed with palm fibres, a cooking pot, a waterskin and a basket containing a few raisins and dates.<sup>74</sup> ‘Ā’isha (may God be pleased with her) used to say, ‘We would be forty days | without a lamp.’ She was asked, ‘What did you live on?’, and she said, ‘On the two staples, water and dates.’<sup>75</sup> 13r

Fāṭima (peace be upon her) would grind flour herself until her hands were chapped, and on her hands could be seen the mark of the millstone handle. She complained about this to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and asked him for a servant to serve her. He said to her, ‘My little daughter, I do not have enough room for all the women of the Muslims, and you are one of them, so be frequent in your remembering and thanking God.’<sup>76</sup> Many times he (peace be upon him) would bind a stone tightly on his stomach out of hunger, he would eat, when he ate, on the ground, he would use his hand as a pillow when he slept, he would cover himself in a cloak, and he would say, ‘I am a servant, I eat and sleep like a servant.’<sup>77</sup> And when he (may God bless him and give him peace) prayed, he could be heard to rumble like the rumbling of a cooking pot through moaning—this rumbling was the seething of his insides, as though he was a man in turmoil through lack of food.

One of the refinements of his morals and nobility of his person that has been related about him (peace be upon him) is that Gabriel (peace be upon him) came and said to him, ‘Muḥammad, I have brought you the most refined morals of this world and the world to come: this is to join with the one who has broken with you, to give to the one who has withheld from you and to forgive the one who has wronged you.’ He said, ‘Visit the sick, feed the starving, and free the captives (that is the prisoners).’<sup>78</sup> He (may God bless him and give him peace) forbade idle talk, frequent questions and wasting possessions. He (peace be upon him) enjoined thriftiness and frugality, saying, ‘The holy Spirit breathed into my heart that no soul dies until it has exhausted its provision.’<sup>79</sup> He said, ‘One who visits the sick is plucking the fruits of paradise’<sup>80</sup> (‘plucking

74 Al-Nasā’ī, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/nasai/26/189>; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 1, pp. 84, 93, 104, 108 (M).

75 Al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi’*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/677770>, with the slight variant that Muḥammad’s family ‘would go for a month without kindling a fire (*mā nastawqidu bi-nārin*)’; Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/2, pp. 114–119 (M).

76 Al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi’*, <http://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/48/39>, recording Fāṭima making her complaint to her husband ‘Alī and the two of them approaching Muḥammad.

77 Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-shamā’īl al-Muḥammadiyya*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/1803520>.

78 Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/abudawud/21/17>.

79 Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/1264630>, with the variant ‘until it has received all’ (*hattā tastawfi*).

80 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/45/49>.

13v عليه السلام: "ما أنا من دَد ولا الددُ مني"، يعني اللهو واللعب. | وقال تزهيداً في الدنيا: "مَن جمع الأموال فإنه يجيء يوم القيامة وفوق عينيه شجاع أقرع له نكتتان سوداوان". وقال عليه السلام: "أتقوا النار ولو بشق تمرّة". وقال: "قُت على باب الجنة فإذا عامّة من يدخلها الفقراء وإذا أصحاب الجدّ محبوبون" (والجدّ الحظّ<sup>1</sup> في الدنيا).

وكان يقول عليه السلام: "رحم<sup>2</sup> الله عبداً سكت فسلم أو قال<sup>3</sup> فغم". ويروي عنه عليه السلام أنه لم يغضب قط، ولم يسأل أحداً شيئاً إلا لسبيل الله، ولم يسأله أحد قط شيئاً إلا أعطاه وابتغى به وجه الله. فأما ما سنّ وفرض الله تعالى على أمته من الصلوات والطهارة والتهيوّ لها والتقدّم فيها من الاستنجاء والإستياك والتضمض والإسباغ الذي معناه الإنقاء والإبتدار إلى الجماعات وحسن الخشوع والصمت ولزوم الصفوف والسكت وتجديد السجود والركوع وما يُقال في كلّ ركعة وسجدة حتى يستوي في علم ذلك كلّ صغير وكبير، عبد<sup>4</sup> أو أمة، فإنّ ذلك على ما يجب للمخلّاق في جلاله وكبريائه إذا ما قام العبد بين يديه والتمس ما لديه.

ولقد روي عنه عليه السلام أنه قال لمن حضره يوماً وقد<sup>5</sup> استراث<sup>6</sup> الوحي: "وكيف لا يحتبس الوحي وأنتم لا تقلّبون أظفاركم<sup>7</sup> ولا تقصّون شواربكم ولا تنقون براجمكم؟"<sup>8</sup> وكان يقول عليه السلام إنّ الصلاة لا يصلح فيها شيء من كلام البشر، إنّما هي للتسبيح والتكبير وقراءة القرآن، وذلك خلاف | فعل من 14r يدخل فيها وهو سهك أو جنب، ومن يقطع صلواته بالأحاديث واللعب والتبرّق والترداد.

<sup>1</sup>B: الجدّ والحظّ <sup>2</sup>B: نعم <sup>3</sup>So in A and B; the word تكلم is written above the line in a different hand in A; C and D: تكلم <sup>4</sup>B: عبداً <sup>5</sup>B omits this word. <sup>6</sup>B: واستراث <sup>7</sup>A and B: أظفاركم, also <sup>8</sup>A note in the margin in A reads: أي عقد أصابعكم المتوسطات followed by C and D.

the fruit' is reaping the palm tree). He said (peace be upon him), 'I am not one for frivolity and frivolity is not for me',<sup>81</sup> meaning play and amusement. | Urging abstinence in the world, he said, 'He who amasses possessions will come on the day of resurrection having above his eyes a bald-headed serpent with two black spots.'<sup>82</sup> He said (peace be upon him), 'Fear the fire, if only through half a date.'<sup>83</sup> He said, 'I stood at the door of paradise, and indeed most of those who went in were the poor, and the people of significance were put in prison'<sup>84</sup> ('significance' is affluence in the world).

13v

He (peace be upon him) used to say, 'God has mercy on a servant who keeps silent and is safe, or speaks and gains success.' It is related of him (peace be upon him) that he never took anything unlawfully, or asked anyone for anything except for the sake of God, and that no one ever asked him for anything without him giving it to him, in doing this seeking to please God.<sup>85</sup> What God almighty has prescribed and imposed upon his community, prayers and purification and the preparation for it and due concern for it by washing after relieving oneself, cleaning the teeth, rinsing, proper ablution (which means purification), hastening to assemblies, sincere humility, quiet keeping in lines, silence, repeating prostrations and bowing and what is said in every bow and prostration, until every child or adult, servant or servant girl should possess knowledge of this equally—this is what is due to the Creator in his glory and sublimity when the worshiper stands before him and makes requests of him.

It has been related of him (peace be upon him) that he said to those who were with him one day when the revelation was thought to be late, 'How could the revelation not be distracted when you do not cut your nails, or trim your moustaches or clean the joints of your fingers?'<sup>86</sup> He used to say (peace be upon him) that the prayers were not the place for any talk of the people, for they were only for glorifying and magnifying, and reciting the Qur'ān. This was in opposition to | the action of the person who began them when he was sweaty or dirty, or interrupted his prayers with conversation, joking, spitting and belching.

14r

81 Possibly al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/24/68>.

82 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/24/8>, with the variant *zabībatāni* for *nuktatāni*.

83 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/102>, meaning that a person can be saved from hell even if they only give to the poor half a date.

84 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/49/1>.

85 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/2, p. 92 (M).

86 Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 243 (M).

ورُوي عن النبيّ صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> أنّه قال عن الله عزّ وجلّ: "أعددت لعبادي ما لا عين رأت ولا أذن سمعت ولا خطر على قلب بشر بل<sup>2</sup> ما أطلعتهم عليه"، يعني فكيف؟ ومن رخص دينه وتيسيره ما أمر الله به على لسانه في السحور، وتقصير الصلاة لمن كان مريضاً أو على سفر، وقوله إنّ أيام التشريق أيام أكل وشرب وبعل<sup>3</sup>.

ومما يعرف به فضيلة دينه وحسن مخارج أمور القرآن أننا نجد التوراة التي في أيدي أهل الكتاب تقول إنّ كلّ قاتل يُقتل. وقد كان موسى عليه السلام نفسه وداود وغيرهما من الأنبياء قد قتلوا، وقتل ملوك بني اسرائيل خلقاً كثيراً فلم يستحقّوا بذلك القتل. فأما القرآن فإنه يحذّر<sup>4</sup> ذلك ويحظره فيقول: ﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا﴾. ورُوي عنه عليه السلام أنّه قال: "من قتل نفساً معاهدة بغير حقّها لم يرح رائحة الجنة" أي لم يجد ريحها. فهذا أمر مزوم مخطوم مقوم مهذب.

وقال موسى وعيسى عليهما السلام: "كلّ دعوى فإنّها ثبتت بشاهدين أو ثلاثة"، وذلك في قول النصارى واليهود. وقد يجوز أن يكون الشاهدان فاجرين كاذبين. وقال الله على لسان النبيّ صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup>: ﴿وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوِي عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ﴾، فحدّد ذلك | ونوره بقول وجيز حريز غير مهممل ولا مغمور.<sup>6</sup>

14V

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>C and D: بله (?) <sup>3</sup>A note in the margin in A reads: أي جماع <sup>4</sup>So in A; C and D:

مغموز: <sup>6</sup>C and D: صلعم <sup>5</sup>B: (wrongly). <sup>6</sup>يحدّد

It was related from the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) that he said from God, great and mighty: 'I have prepared for my servants things that the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, nor the heart of man dreamed of, other than I have made known to them.'<sup>87</sup> What does this mean? The ease and leniency of his religion is shown in God's command through his tongue to eat before daybreak, or for someone who is ill or on a journey to shorten prayers, and his saying that the days after the sacrifice are days for eating, drinking and intimacy between man and wife.

The moral excellence of his religion and the worth of points taken from the Qur'ān can be known, among other ways, by the fact that we find the Torah, which is in the hands of the People of the Book, stating that everyone who kills will be killed. Now Moses himself (peace be upon him), David, and other prophets did in fact kill many people, and so did the kings of the Israelites, although in this they did not deserve killing. But the Qur'ān warns against this and prohibits it, because it states: 'Whoever kills a believer deliberately, the punishment for him is hell, and there he will remain.'<sup>88</sup> It is related of him (peace be upon him) that he said, 'Whoever unlawfully kills a soul who is protected by a treaty will never savour the fragrance of paradise',<sup>89</sup> that is, will never discover its perfume. This is a succinct, specific, focused and refined command.

Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both) said, 'Every allegation must be confirmed by two or three witnesses'; this is in the teachings of the Christians and Jews. But it is possible that the two witnesses will be reprobates and liars, so God said through the tongue of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), 'Call two just witnesses from your people'.<sup>90</sup> Thus he renewed it and | clarified it with a teaching that is concise, unassailable, not outdated or unclear.

14v

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87 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/97/123>.

88 Q 4:93.

89 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/87/52>.

90 Q 65:2.

وأمر موسى عليه السلام بني إسرائيل أن يلعنوا كلَّ مَنْ أَخْلَّ وقصّر في شيء من نوااميس التوراة وشرائعها لعناً مصرّحاً على لسان الأُمّة، وقد يكون أن يفرط الرجل في بعضها أو يهفو أو يزلّ فيها ثمّ يندم وينيب فلا يستحق اللعنة. فأما القرآن فإنه يقول: ﴿والذين إذا فعلوا فاحشة أو ظلموا أنفسهم ذكروا الله فاستغفروا لذنوبهم ومن يغفر الذنوب إلا الله ولم يصروا على ما فعلوا وهم يعلمون، أولئك جزاؤهم مغفرة من ربّهم وجنّات تجري من تحتها الأنهار خالدين فيها ونعم أجر العاملين﴾. فهذه أنباء وأمر تدلّ على أنّ مَنْ أدّاها مسدّد معصوم خائف خاشع ليس بمنّتحل مستحلّ ولا مستخفّ بالأمر هازل.

Moses (peace be upon him) commanded the Israelites to curse publicly by the tongue of the nation everyone who violates or fails to perform any item from the laws and regulations of the Torah, though a man might neglect, slip up or make a mistake in one of them, and then repent and make amends, and so will not deserve to be cursed. But the Qur'ān says: 'And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins—Who forgiveth sins save Allah only?—and will not knowingly repeat (the wrong) they did. The reward of such will be forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide for ever—a bountiful reward for workers!'<sup>91</sup> These are tidings and details that show that the one who delivered them was rightly directed, infallible, modest, submissive, not a borrower, a usurper or a joker about frivolous things.<sup>92</sup>

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91 Q 3:135–136.

92 The arguments that 'Alī brings together under this point are intended to make a self-evident appeal about the fairness of the teachings of Islam, and they also attest to the asceticism of Muḥammad, possibly in reaction to accusations that he was only interested in seeking sensual pleasures, furthering his own ambitions, and amassing wealth.

## الباب الثالث

في آيات النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup>  
التي ردها<sup>2</sup> وحدها أهل الكتاب

وأنا إذا كر من آياته عليه السلام ما فيه برهان لقوم ينصفون، وأبدأ في هذا الباب بما في القرآن منه لثلاثا يقول المخالف إنه لو كان للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>3</sup> آية لذكرت فيه كما ذكر في التوراة والإنجيل آيات موسى وعيسى عليهما السلام. فمن آياته التي ظهرت في أيامه عليه السلام، وشهد به القرآن أنه أسري به في ليلة واحدة من المسجد الحرام إلى المسجد الأقصى وهو قول الله عز وجل: ﴿سبحان الذي أسرى بعبده ليلاً من المسجد الحرام إلى المسجد الأقصى الذي باركنا حوله لنريه من آياتنا﴾. وقد كانت العرب أنكرت ذلك أنسى وكيف قطع مسافة شهرين ذهاباً وجائياً في ليلة واحدة فأثاه أبو بكر رضوان الله عليه وسأله عن ذلك، فقال عليه السلام: "نعم ولقد مررت بعير بني فلان وهم بوادي كذا وقد ند لهم بعير فدللتهم عليه، ومررت بعير بني فلان<sup>4</sup> وهم نيام فشربت من إناء لهم وأن عيرهم الآن ترد يقدمها جمل أورق عليه غرارتان إحداهما<sup>5</sup> سوداء والأخرى بقاء". فابتدر القوم الثنية فإذا البعير قد أقبلت والجمل الأورق يقدمها. فلم يجدوا لآيته مدفعاً. وهي لعمرى آية صريحة<sup>6</sup> كافية موجودة في القرآن تجع عليها أهل الإسلام طراً.

وهم بوادي كذا وقد ند: B omits the following sentence: 3B: صلعم 2D: ردها 1B: صلعم

6This word is added in a different hand above the line in A; it is lacking in B. 5A: احدهما 6This word is added in a different hand above the line in A; it is lacking in B.



**On the miracles of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace)  
which the People of the Book have opposed and rejected**

Now I will relate some of his miracles (peace be upon him) which contain proof for people of fair minds. And I will begin this point with what is in the Qur'ān, so that the opponent cannot say, 'If the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) had any miracle, then it would have been mentioned in it, in the same way as Moses and Jesus's (peace be upon them) miracles are mentioned in the Torah and Gospel.' Among his miracles that were made manifest in his time (peace be upon him) and to which the Qur'ān witnesses, is that he was taken in a single night from the holy mosque to the farthest mosque. This is the saying | of God, great and mighty: 'Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far distant place of worship the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our tokens!'<sup>93</sup> The Arabs rejected this, saying, 'When and how did he cover a distance of two months going and coming in a single night?' So Abū Bakr (may God's favour be upon him) came to him and asked him about this, and he (peace be upon him) said, 'Yes, and I passed the camels of such and such a tribe when they were in a particular valley; a camel had run away from them and I was able to point it out to them. And I passed the camels of such and such a tribe when they were sleeping and I drank from one of their flasks. At this moment their caravan is returning, led by an ash-grey coloured camel with two sacks on it, one black and the other black and white.' The people hurried to the pass, and there were the camels approaching, with the ash-grey camel leading them.<sup>94</sup> So they could not deny his miracle, and it is indeed an unambiguous and satisfactory miracle, to be found in the Qur'ān, and with the people of Islam agreeing upon it without exception.

15r

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93 Q 17:1.

94 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 267/ trans. p. 184.

ومن آياته التي ذكرها الله في كتابه أنه لما آذاه المشركون واستهزأوا به قال له: ﴿فأصدغ! بما تؤمر وأعرض عن المشركين<sup>2</sup>. إنا كفيناك المستهزئين﴾.<sup>3</sup> فهذا في القرآن أيضاً لا يختلف فيه اثنان ولا في تفسيره، وهو أن خمسة نفر من رؤساء المشركين كانوا يستهزأون به ويؤذونه، فنزل عليه جبريل عليه السلام وقال له: "إذا طافوا بالبيت فسل الله فيهم ما أحببت فإنني فاعله بهم ومنزله عليهم". فمرّ به أحدهم وهو لُهب بن أبي لُهب في الطواف، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أكلك كلب الله"، فأكله الأسد. ثم مرّ به الوليد بن المغيرة فأومأ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup> عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> إلى جرح كان في باطن رجله فانتقض عليه وقتله. ومرّ به الأسود بن عبد يغوث فأومأ إلى بطنه فسُقي<sup>6</sup> ومات. ثم مرّ به الأسود بن المطلب فرمى في وجهه ورقة وقال اللهم اعم بصره وأثكله ولده، فابتلي بذلك كله. ومرّ به العاص بن وائل فأشار إلى أنحوص رجله فدخلت في أنحوصه شوكة فقتلته. ومرّ به الحارث ابن الطلالة فأومأ إليه فتفتقاً قيحاً وهلك. وكُفي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>7</sup> أمر المستهزئين، وكانوا أجلة القوم وأعلامهم.

وروي عن آمنة أم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>8</sup> أنه حين وقع من البطن خرج معه نور وأنه وقع على أربع قوائم وهو رافع وجهه وبصره إلى السماء.

ومن آياته التي بهرت وبانت لجميع من شاهده<sup>9</sup> يوم بدرائه حثافي وجوه المشركين التراب وقال: "شاهت الوجوه" أي قبحت، فانهزموا وقتلوا.

<sup>1</sup>A note written in a different hand below the line in A reads: فاجهر به، يضاوي رحمه الله.

<sup>3</sup>A note written in a different hand below the line in A reads: لا تلتفت إلى ما يقولون.

<sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: شاهد

<sup>6</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: لعله فاستسقى

<sup>9</sup>B: شاهد

Among his miracles that God mentions in his Book is that when the polytheists tormented him and ridiculed him, he said to him, 'So proclaim that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the idolaters. Lo! We defend thee from the scoffers.'<sup>95</sup> This is in the Qur'ān as well, and there are not two men who disagree over it or its interpretation: it is that five leading individuals of the polytheists were mocking him and tormenting him, so Gabriel (peace be upon him) descended to him and said to him, 'When they circumambulate the House, ask God what you wish for them and I will carry it out and make it happen to them.' So one of them, Lahab ibn Abī Lahab, passed him in the circumambulation, and the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) said, 'May the hound of God devour you', and a lion devoured him. Then al-Walid ibn al-Mughīra passed him, so the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) pointed to a wound that was in the sole of his foot, | and it broke open and killed him. Al-Aswad ibn 'Abd Yaghūth passed him, and he pointed to his stomach so that it swelled up with water and he died. Then al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib passed him, and he threw a leaf in his face and said, 'O God, blind him and cause him to lose his son', and he suffered all this. Al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il passed him, and he signed to the hollow of his sole so that a thorn entered it and killed him. Then al-Ḥārith ibn al-Ṭulāṭila passed him, and he pointed at him so that he burst open with puss and perished.<sup>96</sup> The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) was saved from the problem of the mockers, who were the most prominent and distinguished men of the people.

15v

It is related from Āmina, the mother of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), that when he emerged from the womb a light came out with him, and that he fell on hands and feet, with his face and gaze raised to heaven.<sup>97</sup>

And among his miracles which shone out plainly visible to all who saw him on the day of Badr is that he threw dust into the faces of the polytheists, saying, 'May the faces be deformed' (that is, 'grow ugly'),<sup>98</sup> and they were defeated and killed.

95 Q 15:94–95.

96 'Alī actually names six of these tormenters. Cf. Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, pp. 271–272/trans. p. 187, who agrees on four of the names.

97 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, pp. 63, 97 (M); cf. Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 102/trans. p. 69, who says the light shone from her during the time she was pregnant with Muḥammad.

98 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/32/101>, connecting this with the battle of Ḥunayn; Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 445/trans. p. 301, relates that at Badr Muḥammad threw small pebbles at the enemy.

ورُوي عن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه، أنه سمع نداء رجل وهو يقول: "يا رسول الله تهدمت البيوت من شدة المطر"، فقال عليه السلام: "حوالينا ولا علينا". قال أنس: "فبصرت<sup>1</sup> بعيني السحابة انجابت عن المدينة"، وأنه قال صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>2</sup> لمن حضره من المشركين: "من لفظ منكم باسم أبيه أو أخيه فأنا كاذب"، فما قدر أحد منهم أن يلفظ بذلك. وأنه أتي بقبضتين من تمر يوم الخندق فأمر أن يُصب بين يديه، ونادى مناديه في الجيش فأكلوا وشبعوا. وأنه انكسر سيف عكاشة بن محصن يوم بدر، فقال: "يا رسول الله انكسر سيفي"، فأخذ عليه السلام جذلاً<sup>16r</sup> من حطب وأعطاه إياه وقال له: "هزه"، فهزه عكاشة، فصار سيفاً وتقدم وجالد به ولم يزل بعد ذلك معه. وأنه عليه السلام<sup>3</sup> أخذ حصاة فخرّكها بيده فسبّحت ثم وضعها في يد أبي بكر فسبّحت، ثم في يد عمر، ثم في يد عثمان فسبّحت في أيديهم.

ورُوي عن ابن عباس رحمة الله عليه، أن رجلاً أخذ فراخ طير في غزاة، فجاء الطائر إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup>، ورفرف عند رأسه ثم وقع بين يديه، فقال عليه السلام: "من أخذ فراخ هذا الطائر أطلبوها وردّوها عليه"، فوجدوها عند بعض المسلمين فردّوها عليه.

ورُوي أنه استناخ بعير بين يديه ثم رغا، فدعا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بصاحبه وقال: "إن هذا البعير شكا وذكر أنه لم يزل عندكم صغيراً تعملون عليه حتى إذا كبر أردتم قتله"، فقال الرجل: "صدق يا رسول الله، وأنا ممسك عنه".

صلعم: <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>B: عليه السلام <sup>2</sup>B: فنظرت <sup>1</sup>B:

It is related from Anas ibn Mālik (may God be pleased with him) that he heard a man shouting and saying, 'Messenger of God, the dwellings are being destroyed through the storm's ferocity!' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Around us and not upon us!' Anas said, 'And I saw with my own eyes the cloud moving away from the town.'<sup>99</sup> He (may God bless him and give him peace) said to polytheists who were with him, 'If any of you can speak the name of his father or brother, I am a liar', and not one of them could do this. On the day of al-Khandaq<sup>100</sup> he was brought two handfuls of dried dates, and he ordered them to be set down before him. His herald summoned the army, and they ate and were satisfied. 'Ukkāsha ibn Miḥṣan's sword was shattered on the day of Badr,<sup>101</sup> and he said, 'Messenger of God, my sword | is broken.' So he (peace be upon him) took a piece of kindling wood and gave it to him, saying, 'Shake it'. So 'Ukkāsha shook it and it became a sword. He went forward wielding it, and after this it never left him.<sup>102</sup> And he (peace be upon him) took a pebble and moved it with his hand and it gave praise, and then he put it in Abū Bakr's hand and it gave praise, then in 'Umar's hand, and then in 'Uthmān's hand, and it gave praise in their hands.<sup>103</sup>

16r

It is related from Ibn 'Abbās (may God's mercy be upon him) that on a raid a man took a bird's fledglings; the bird came to the Messenger of God (may God bless him and give him peace) and flapped its wings around his head, and then flew down in front of him. He (peace be upon him) said, 'Who has taken this bird's fledglings? Look for them and give it them back.' So they found them with a Muslim and gave them back to it.<sup>104</sup>

It is related that a camel knelt down in front of him and then bellowed. The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) called its owner and said, 'This camel has complained, saying that it has always been with you from when it was young, and you used it for work, until now it has grown old you want to kill it.' The man said, 'It is right, Messenger of God, and I am not tending to it.'<sup>105</sup>

99 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/2, p. 117 (M); Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, e.g. <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/15/11>.

100 The Battle of the Ditch in 627.

101 The Battle of Badr in 624.

102 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, p. 125 (M); Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 452/trans. p. 305 (M).

103 This is the first of a number of stories featuring the Righty-Guided Caliphs in which either 'Uthmān or 'Alī is absent with no explanation given.

104 *Al-adab al-mufrad*, <http://sunnah.com/adab/20>, no. 382.

105 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, p. 124 (M).

ورُوي أنّ بني غفار أرادوا أن ينخروا عجلاً لهم، فنطق العجل وقال: "يا بني غفار أمر نجيح، صائح يصيح بمكة لا إله إلا الله، فتركوه وأتوا مكة، فوجدوا النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> قد ظهر، فأمنوا به.

ورُوي أنّ ذئباً شدّ على غنم، فقال الرعاة: "أما تعجبون من هذا الذئب؟" فنطق الذئب وقال: "أنتم أعجب مني، قد ظهر نبيّ بمكة يدعو إلى الله ولا تجيبونه."

فهذه كلّها أخبار مشهورة عند المسلمين كلّهم لا ينكرون شيئاً منها لأنّها ظهرت على رؤوس الملأ. ومن صحّة<sup>2</sup> آية الذئب أنّ ولد الرجل الذي كلّمه الذئب يُسمّون<sup>16v</sup> إلى يومنا هذا بني مكلم الذئب، يتوارثون ذلك وينسبون إليه<sup>3</sup> لئلا ينسى ولا يجد أحد مساعاً إلى ابطاله.

ودعا عليه السلام على العرب فاحتبس عنهم القطر وأجدبت البلاد.<sup>4</sup>

ورُوي عنه عليه السلام أنّه أخبر أبا سفيان بأمر جرى بينه وبين امرأته هند فعجب أبو سفيان من ذلك وقال: "أخرجت سرّي، لأدقن يدها على رجلها"، فقال النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم: "لا تظلم هنداً فما أخرجت سرّك"،<sup>5</sup> فقال أبو سفيان: "لقد اتهمتها وهممتُ بها، فأما إذ حدّثني بما حدّثتُ أنا به نفسي فقد علمت أنّها بريئة<sup>6</sup> مما ظننتُ."

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: صحّت <sup>3</sup>So in C and D; it is lacking in A and B. <sup>4</sup>B: عنهم <sup>5</sup>C and D: سرّاً <sup>6</sup>C and

D: بريّة

It is related that the Banū Ghifār wanted to slaughter a calf they owned, but the calf spoke and said, ‘Banū Ghifār, a propitious event! Someone is crying out in Mecca, “There is no god but God.”’ So they let it alone and went to Mecca and found that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) had appeared, and so they believed in him.<sup>106</sup>

It is related that a wolf was harassing sheep, and the shepherds said, ‘Are you not amazed at this wolf?’ But the wolf spoke and said, ‘You are more amazing than me. A prophet has appeared in Mecca proclaiming God, but you have not responded to him.’<sup>107</sup>

All these are reports well known among all Muslims, and they do not deny anything from them because they took place in front of the leaders of the community. And an indication that the miracle of the wolf is correct is that the descendants of the man to whom | the wolf spoke are called to our own day ‘the sons of the one spoken to by the wolf’. They keep this as an inheritance, and they are traced back to it so that it should not be forgotten and no one should find a reason to contradict it. 16v

He (peace be upon him) cursed the Arabs, so that their rain was withheld and the land grew parched.<sup>108</sup>

It is related of him (peace be upon him) that he told Abū Sufyān about something that had occurred between him and his wife Hind, and Abū Sufyān was shocked at this and said, ‘She has given away my secret! I am going to crush her hand on her foot.’ But the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) said, ‘Do not be unjust to Hind, because she has not given away your secret.’ So Abū Sufyān said, ‘I accused her and thought it was her, but now that you have told me what I was telling myself, I know that she is innocent of what I suspected.’<sup>109</sup>

106 Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, pp. 101–103 (M); Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 134/trans. p. 93; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/63/92>.

107 Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, p. 114 (M).

108 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/15/15>.

109 Possibly related to al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/46/21>.

ومن آياته عليه السلام التي ظهرت، ما رُوي عن أنس بن مالك، قال: اتخذت أُمِّي حَيْسًا وبعثت به إلى النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>1</sup> تسأله أَنْ يطعم منه، فقام النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>2</sup> وقال لأصحابه: "قوموا بنا"، فلما رأت أُمِّي الجماعة قالت: "يا رسول الله، أعددت لك شيئاً بمقدار ما تأكله وحدك"، قال: "فدعا النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>3</sup> بالبركة وقال لي: أدخل عليّ عشرة عشرة، فكانوا يشبعون ويخرجون، وأكلنا معهم وشبعنا".

ورُوي عن يعلى بن أمية أَنَّ النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>4</sup> أراد<sup>5</sup> الوضوء وهو في سفر<sup>6</sup> له قال: "اذهب إلى تينك الشجرتين وقلْ لهما إِنَّ رسول الله صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>7</sup> يأمركما أَنْ تجتمعا"، فأقبلتا تحْدَان الأرض خدًّا حتى اجتمعتا، وتوضأ رسول الله صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>8</sup> بينهما ثم أمرهما بالرجوع إلى مكانهما فرجعتا.

17r

ورُوي أَنَّ يهودياً دعاه إلى طعامه<sup>9</sup> وقرب إليه شاة مسمومة، فقال عليه السلام: "إِنَّ<sup>10</sup> هذه الشاة تخبرني أَنَّها مسمومة"، فأقرَّ اليهودي بذلك وقال: "أردت امتحانك بها،<sup>11</sup> وقلتُ إِنَّ كان نبياً لم يخفْ ذلك عنه، وإنْ كان ملكاً<sup>12</sup> أكل منها وأرحتْ الناس منه".

ورُوي عن جابر بن عبد الله الأنصاري قال: "كنا مع النبي صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم<sup>13</sup> في سفر فأصابنا عطش شديد فجهشنا إليه وبين يديه تور فيه ماء فوضع يده فيه، وجعل الماء يتخلَّل<sup>14</sup> من بين أصابعه كأنها عيون، فشربنا وروينا منه ونحن أربعمائة رجل وتوضأنا.

<sup>9</sup>Reading صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: يسفر <sup>6</sup>B: راد <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>1</sup>B: with B; illegible in A. <sup>10</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>11</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A. <sup>12</sup>So in A and B; C and D: ملأاً <sup>13</sup>B: صلعم <sup>14</sup>C: يتخلَّل (wrongly).



Among his miracles (peace be upon him) that appeared is what was related from Anas ibn Mālik. He said: My mother took a date and butter loaf and sent it to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), asking him to eat some of it. So the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) rose and said to his Companions, 'Rise with us.' But when my mother saw the throng she said, 'Messenger of God, I have prepared this thing for you, enough for you to eat alone.' He said: The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) invoked the blessing and said to me, 'Bring me ten at a time'; and they satisfied themselves and came out, and we ate with them and were satisfied.<sup>110</sup>

It is related from Ya'lā ibn Umayya that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) wished to make ablutions when he was on a journey, so he said: Go to those two trees and say to them, 'The Messenger of God (may God bless him and give him peace) orders you to come together.' Then they came forward, making a furrow in the ground, until they came together; the Messenger of God (may God bless him and give him peace) performed his ablutions between them, and then ordered them to return | to their place, and they did so.<sup>111</sup>

17r

It is related that a certain Jew invited him to eat, and set before him a poisoned lamb. He (peace be upon him) said, 'This lamb tells me that it is poisoned.' The Jew admitted this, and said, 'I wanted to test you, so I said: "If he is a prophet this will not be hidden from him, and if he is a king he will eat it and I will rid people of him."' <sup>112</sup>

It is related of Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī that he said: We were with the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) on a journey and we were afflicted by severe thirst, so we sought his help and in front of him was a vessel containing water. He placed his hand into it and made the water flow from between his fingers as though they were springs. So we drank and our thirst was quenched from it and we performed the ablutions, four hundred men of us.<sup>113</sup>

110 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, p. 117, 1/2, p. 124 (M); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/1274500>.

111 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, p. 112 (M); Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/55>, ch. 18.

112 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1/1, pp. 113–114, vol. 2/2, pp. 6–7, vol. 4, p. 104 (M); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/abudawud/41/17>.

113 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/88>.

فهذا في هذا الكتاب كاف، ولو أردنا الاستقصاء لطال الكتاب، وفي هذا شفاء لمن أراد الله هدايته وإنقاذه، فإنّ منه ما هو مأخوذ وموجود في القرآن نفسه ومنه ما هو مأخوذ عن أخذ المسلمون عنه القرآن وأتمن على ما أدّى إلى الأمة منه. ومثلهم في ذلك مثل حواربي المسيح عليه السلام الذين أدّوا إلى النصارى أسفاراً من الإنجيل ونقلوا إليهم أخبار المسيح. فإنّ كانوا ثقات مؤتمنين على ما نقلوا وأدّوا من خبره فإنّهم في جميع ما أخبروا عنه غير متهمين. وإنّ كانوا غير ثقات في ذلك فهم<sup>2</sup> في جميع ما أدّوا متهمون غاشّون لأنفسهم أولاً ثم للناس أجمعين.

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<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D: فانهم (wrongly).

This is enough in this book, and if we had wanted to go into the matter in full the book would have been lengthy. But in this there is healing for whoever God wills to give guidance and salvation. Some of it is what is taken from the Qur'ān itself and is in it, and some of it is what is taken from those from whom the Muslims have taken the Qur'ān and are considered reliable in what is passed on to the community. In this they are comparable to the disciples of Christ (peace be upon him), who passed on to the Christians books of the Gospel and transmitted the reports of Christ to them. So if they were trustworthy and reliable in any report of him which they transmitted and passed on, they are not to be doubted in the whole of what they have reported from him. And if they were not trustworthy in this, they are to be doubted in the whole of what they have passed on, as deceivers of themselves in the first place, and then of all people.

في نبوّاته عليه السلام على أمور غائبة عنه تمّت في أيّامه<sup>1</sup>

ونبدأ في هذا الباب أيضاً<sup>2</sup> بما في القرآن لتأكيد الحجّة وإبطال العلة. قال الله عزّ وجلّ لرسوله صلّى الله عليه وسلّم: <sup>3</sup>﴿لَتَدْخُلَنَّ المسجد الحرام إن شاء الله آمنين محلّقين رؤوسكم ومقصرين لا تخافون﴾، فدخلوه<sup>4</sup> على ما قال الله<sup>5</sup> في حياته. وقال: <sup>6</sup>﴿وإذ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الذين كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللهُ وَاللهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ﴾. فكان كما قال الله، وأرادوا أن يَمْكُرُوا به فردّ الله مكرهم وأبطل<sup>6</sup> كيدهم.

وقال الله: <sup>7</sup>﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الذين آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا﴾. فضرب الله بذلك وجوه الكفّار، فكان كما قال. وقال: <sup>8</sup>﴿سَأَلْتَنِي<sup>7</sup> فِي قُلُوبِ الذين كَفَرُوا الرِّعْبَ فَاضْرَبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرَبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ﴾. فكان كما أخبره الله به وفعل بهم كما أمر به. وقال: <sup>9</sup>﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى<sup>8</sup> الذين نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخوانِهِم الذين كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مَعَهُمْ وَلَا نَطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ. لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرِجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُولَّيْنَّ الْأَدْبَارَ، ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ﴾. فكان الأمر<sup>9</sup> كما قال الله<sup>10</sup> لنبيه صلّى

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; the title of this *Bāb* is illegible in A; C and D: أمور غائبة حكى على عليه السلام أنه عليه السلام  
<sup>2</sup>Reading with B; this word is illegible in A; C and D omit it. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>A, B and C: فدخلوها (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>This word is written above the line in the same hand in A; B omits it. <sup>6</sup>C and D: وأبسل, a misreading of A. <sup>7</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D: سنلقى; cf. Q 8:12. <sup>8</sup>B omits this word. <sup>9</sup>B omits this word. <sup>10</sup>This word is written above the line in the same hand in A; D omits it.

**That he (peace be upon him) related matters that were hidden from him and were fulfilled during his time**

17v

We shall also begin this point with what is in the Qurʾān in order to confirm the evidence and to prove the pretexts false. God, great and mighty, said to his Messenger (may God bless him and give him peace): ‘Ye shall indeed enter the Inviolable Place of Worship, if Allah will, secure, (having your hair) shaven and cut, not fearing’.<sup>114</sup> And they entered it in the way that God said during his lifetime. He said: ‘And when those who disbelieve plot against thee to wound thee fatally, or to kill thee or to drive thee forth; they plot, but Allah plotteth; and Allah is the best of plotters’.<sup>115</sup> And it happened as God said: they tried to plot against him, but God overturned their plotting and frustrated their cunning.

God said: ‘O ye who believe! Remember Allah’s favour unto you when there came against you hosts, and We sent against them a great wind and hosts ye could not see’.<sup>116</sup> God struck the unbelievers’ faces with it, and it happened as he said. He said: ‘I will throw fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Then smite the necks and smite of them each finger’.<sup>117</sup> And it happened as God told him, and he did to them as he had been commanded. He said: ‘Hast thou not observed those who are hypocrites? They tell their brethren who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture: If ye are driven out, we surely will go out with you, and we will never obey anyone against you, and if ye are attacked we verily will help you. And Allah beareth witness that they verily are liars. Indeed, if they are driven out they go not out with them, and indeed if they are attacked they help them not, and indeed if they had helped them they would have turned and fled, and then they would not have been victorious’.<sup>118</sup> It turned out as God said to his Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), for they were

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<sup>114</sup> Q 48:27.

<sup>115</sup> Q 8:30.

<sup>116</sup> Q 33:9.

<sup>117</sup> Q 8:12.

<sup>118</sup> Q 59:11–12.

الله عليه وسلم،<sup>1</sup> فَإِنَّ أَوْلَئِكَ أُخْرِجُوا فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ إِخْوَانُهُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ مَعَهُمْ وَقَتَلُوا فَلَمْ يَنْصُرُوهُمْ.

18r فما عسى يقول القائل في هذه الآيات والقرآن ينطق بها والأمة تشهد بحقيقتها وإنما<sup>2</sup> كانت<sup>3</sup> تتوقع صحتها وتتحدث الرجال والنساء بها؟ فَإِنْ سَاغَ فِي مِثْلِهَا التَّمْوِيهِ وَالْبَهْتِ وَتَقْيِيدِهِ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، فَمَا تَوَظَّنُّهُمْ<sup>4</sup> أَنْ يَكُونَ قَيْدٌ<sup>5</sup> فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ أَيْضًا أَبَاطِيلَ مَقِيدَةٍ تَجَافَى عَنْهَا مَنْ شَاهَدَ الْأَمْرَ وَأَغْضَى عَلَيْهَا، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْغِ ذَلِكَ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَفِي مَنْ حَضَرَهُمَا فَذَلِكَ غَيْرُ سَائِعٍ فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَحَمَلْتَهُ أَيْضًا. وَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي النَّاكِثِينَ مِنْ مُشْرِكِي قُرَيْشٍ: ﴿قَاتِلُوهُمْ يَعِدُّهُمْ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾، فَكَانَ كَمَا قَالَ.

فَأَمَّا مَا جَاءَتْ بِهِ الْأَخْبَارُ الصَّادِقَةُ، فَمِنْ ذَلِكَ عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ عِبَادَةَ السَّاعِدِيِّ أَنَّهُ قَالَ كُنَّا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>6</sup> فِي غَزَاةٍ وَمَعَنَا رَجُلٌ لَا يَبَارِزُ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ إِلَّا قَتَلَهُ، فَذَكَرْنَا ذَلِكَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>7</sup> فَقَالَ: "أَمَّا إِنَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ؟" قَالَ سَعْدٌ: "فَمَا زِلْتُ أَتَّبِعُهُ لِأَعْرِفَ عَاقِبَةَ أَمْرِهِ". فَأَصَابَتْهُ جِرَاحَةٌ وَاسْتَبْطَأَ الْمَوْتَ فَوَضَعَ سَيْفَهُ عَلَى سَرِّتِهِ وَتَحَامَلَ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ.

وَرُوي عَنْهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ لَخَالِدِ بْنِ الْوَلِيدِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ<sup>8</sup> حِينَ وَجَّهَهُمْ إِلَى أَكِيدِرٍ<sup>9</sup> دُومَةَ الْجَنْدَلِ: "إِنَّكُمْ سَتَأْتُونَهُ فَتَجِدُونَهُ<sup>10</sup> عَلَى سَطْحِهِ يَتَصَيَّدُ الْبَقَرَ"، فَوَجَدُوهُ كَذَلِكَ.

أي لا تؤمن أهل 4B adds the following phrase: كلَّها 3C and D: وإنَّها 2C and D: صلعم 1B

8B صلعم 7B: صلعم 6B: Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit this word. 5 الكاب

omits this word. 9A note in the margin in A reads: اسم رئيس الجندل 10B: فتجدونه (wrongly).

expelled though these brothers of theirs did not leave with them, they were fought against though they did not assist them.

What can anyone possibly say against these miracles | when the Qur'ān speaks about them, the community witnesses to their truthfulness, and had indeed been expecting verification of them, and men and women talk about them? If such things are to be taken as distortion and dissimulation and they can be included in the Qur'ān, then we will not believe them that in the Torah and Gospel specific falsehoods have also [not] been included,<sup>119</sup> from which those who witnessed the matter turned away and to which they shut their eyes. If this cannot be accepted about the Torah and Gospel and about those who were alive at the time, it certainly cannot be accepted about the Qur'ān and its bearers either. About the oath-breakers of the polytheists among Quraysh, God, great and mighty, said: 'Fight them! Allah will chastise them at your hands, and He will lay them low and give you victory over them, and He will heal the breasts of folk who are believers',<sup>120</sup> and it happened as he said.

18r

Among the truthful reports that are known is the one from Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda al-Sā'idī who said: 'We were with the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) on an expedition, and with us was a man who only had to meet a polytheist in combat and he would kill him. We mentioned this to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and he said: "Is he not from the people of hell?"' Sa'd said, 'So I kept on following him to know what would finally happen to him. He was wounded and found death lingering, so he set his sword on his navel and pushed against it until he killed himself'.<sup>121</sup>

It is passed on from him (peace be upon him) that he said to Khālid ibn al-Walid and his companions when he sent them to Ukaydar of Dumat al-Jandal: 'You will arrive and find him in the enclosure of his property catching cattle', and they found him doing this.<sup>122</sup>

119 The sense requires a negative here, although there is no trace of this in either MS. Cf. Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 38: 'we will not believe the adversaries who say that the Torah and the Gospel do not contain falsehood ...'.

120 Q 9:14.

121 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/56/112>. Muḥammad knew that despite this man's strong faith he would not enter paradise because he would sin by committing suicide.

122 *Bulūgh al-marām*, <http://sunnah.com/bulugh/11>, no. 1321 (from Abū Dāwūd), with no mention of Muḥammad predicting where Ukaydar would be found.

ورُوي عنه صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> أنه ضلّت ناقته، فجعل يسأل عنها، فقال المنافقون:  
 18v هذا محمد يدّعي خبر السماء وهو لا يدري أين ناقته. فعلم ما يتناجون به،<sup>2</sup> فجاء  
 وخطب<sup>3</sup> وقال: "ألا وإني لا أعلم إلا ما علّمني ربّي وقد خبرني ربّي أنّ ناقتي بوادي  
 كذا متعلّق زمامها<sup>4</sup> بشجرة"، فطلبوها فوجدوها كذلك.

ورُوي عنه صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> أنه جمع الناس يوماً ونعى إليهم النّجاشي ملك  
 الحبشة وصلى عليه وكبر أربع تكبيرات. فورد الخبر بوفاته في ذلك اليوم. وكان بينه  
 وبين أرض الحبشة البحر، ولم تكن مكة مدرجة مثل مدارج الشرق والغرب.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: يتحدّثون به <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A;

C and D omit these two words. <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: رأسها <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم



It is passed on from him (may God bless him and give him peace) that his she-camel went astray, and he was asking about her. The hypocrites said, 'Here is Muḥammad claiming messages from heaven, though he does not | know 18v where his camel is.' But he knew what they were insinuating to one another, so he came and declared and said, 'I only know what my Lord has taught me, and my Lord has informed me that my she-camel is in such a valley with her halter tied to a tree.' So they searched for her and found her like this.<sup>123</sup>

It is passed on from him (may God bless him and give him peace) that one day he gathered the people together and announced to them the death of the Negus, king of Ethiopia, and prayed for him and exclaimed four times, 'God is most great'.<sup>124</sup> The news of his passing arrived that same day, with the sea lying between him and the land of Ethiopia, and Mecca not being on a route like the routes of east and west.

<sup>123</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*, ed. Maḥmūd Sayyid al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, Cairo, 1911–1913, vol. 3, p. 335 (M).

<sup>124</sup> E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/63/106>.

## في نبوّات النبيّ عليه السلام التي تمّت بعد وفاته

ونبدأ في هذا الباب أيضاً بما في القرآن من نبوّات النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> لثلاث يبقى لأهل الفتنة والعناد حجة يستندون إليها ولا علة يمتسكون بها. فمن ذلك قول الله عزّ وجلّ: ﴿ألم نشرح لك صدرك ووضعنا عنك وزرك الذي أنقض ظهرك ورفعنا لك ذكرك﴾، أي أنّه يكون مذكوراً مقدّماً اسمه بعد اسم الله في كلّ خطبة ومناقشة ومناظرة ونكاح وصلاة وغيرها.<sup>2</sup>

ومن ذلك قول الله تعالى: ﴿إذا جاء نصر الله والفتح ورأيت الناس يدخلون في دين الله أفواجا فسبح بحمد ربك واستغفره إنّه كان تواباً﴾. فعني بهذه السورة نفسه إلى أمته وأنبأهم بما هو كائن بعده من دخول الناس أفواجا وأرسالا في دينه، فكان ذلك كذلك، أيرونه ظاهراً بعد دهر ولا يدفعونه.

19r

وقال الله تعالى: ﴿ألم غلبت الروم في أدنى الأرض وهم من بعد غلبهم سيغلبون في بضع سنين﴾. فكان ذلك كما قال في حرب كانت<sup>3</sup> بين كسرى وقيصر، وتبين للعرب أنّ الوحي قد صدق. وما زال ذلك حديثهم وحديث صبيانهم ونسوانهم<sup>4</sup> في البيوتات يتوقعونه ويستخبرون عنه حتى صحّ ذلك للجميع.

ومن ذلك قول الله عزّ وجلّ: ﴿وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم<sup>5</sup> وعملوا الصالحات ليستخلفنهم في الأرض كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم ولم يكن لهم دينهم الذي ارتضى لهم وليبدّلنهم من بعد خوفهم أمناً﴾. فهذه أيضاً نبوة قد تمّت وظهرت لا

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>3</sup>This word is written in the same hand above the line in

A. <sup>4</sup>B: ونسائهم <sup>5</sup>B omits this word.

## On the prophecies of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that were fulfilled after his passing

We shall also begin this point with the prophecies of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) that are in the Qur'ān, so that no argument will be left to the people of dissension and obstinacy to rely on and no hold to cling to. Among these are the words of God, great and mighty: 'Have We not caused thy bosom to dilate, and eased thee of the burden which weighed down thy back, and exalted thy fame?'<sup>125</sup> This means that his name will be mentioned and given precedence after the name of God in every sermon, charm, debate, marriage, act of worship and so on.

Among these are the words of God the exalted: 'When Allah's succour and the triumph cometh and thou seest mankind entering the religion of Allah in troops, then hymn the praises of thy Lord, and seek forgiveness of Him. Lo! He is ever ready to show mercy'.<sup>126</sup> In this chapter he announced his actual death to his community and prophesied to them about what would be after him, the entry of people in troops and drove into his religion. And it happened in this way. | They see it clearly after much time, and they do not deny it.

19r

God the almighty says: 'Alif. Lam. Mim. The Romans have been defeated in the nearer land, and after their defeat they will be victorious within a few years'.<sup>127</sup> And it happened as he said in a war that took place between Chosroes and Caesar. So it became plain to the Arabs that the revelation was true, and it continued to be talked about among them and their children and women in their homes. They were awaiting it and asking about it until it was shown to everyone to be true.

Among these are the words of God, great and mighty: 'Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good work that He will surely give them the succession in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to have succession; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear'.<sup>128</sup> This is also a prophecy which has been fulfilled and become manifest, and no one will find a means of denying it, because he has given the Muslims

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<sup>125</sup> Q 94:1-4.

<sup>126</sup> Q 110.

<sup>127</sup> Q 30:1-4.

<sup>128</sup> Q 24:55.

يجد أحد<sup>1</sup> إلى إنكارها سبيلاً. فقد استخلف المسلمين ومكّن لهم دينهم وأبدلهم بالخوف أمناً. فأية آية ونبوة<sup>2</sup> أصح وأبين من هذه؟

ومنه قوله: ﴿هو الذي أرسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون﴾. فقد صدق الله ورسوله عليه السلام،<sup>3</sup> وظهر دينه على كل دين وأذن له أهل كل ملّة.

ومنه قوله: ﴿قل<sup>4</sup> للمخلفين من الأعراب ستدعون إلى قوم أولي بأس شديد تقاتلونهم أو يسلمون، فإن طيعوا يؤتكم الله أجراً حسناً وإن تنولوا كما توليتم من قبل يعذبكم عذاباً أليماً﴾. وكان هؤلاء قوم تخلفوا عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> فأنبأهم أنهم يقاتلون الروم والفرس أو يسلمون،<sup>6</sup> فكان كذلك كما في القرآن يشهد بصحته العيان.

فما عسى يقول المخالفون في هذه النبوات، وما عسى يسوغ لهم فيها من الردّ والحجة وقد برّت وتمّت وانتشرت شرقاً وغرباً وأشرقّت؟ وإن غمط ذلك غامط ولم يكتف به وصمّم في رده وتكذيبه لم يوبق إلا نفسه، ولم يسخط إلا ربه، ولم يغبن<sup>7</sup> إلا حظّه، ولم يقدر أن يوجدنا في كتبه إلا مثله.

فأمّا ما جاءت به الروايات التي لا شكّ فيها، فقول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>8</sup>: "إنّ لي خمسة أسماء، أنا محمد، وأحمد، والمحيي يحو الله بي الكفر، والهاشر أحشر الناس، والعاقب أي أنّي آخر الأنبياء". فقد صدق حديثه عليه السلام، وختم الله به النبوات، ومحى به الكفر، أي ذلّه وقلّله ومحاه عن سرّة الأرض وقلبها وبقي رسمه في أطرافها وحواشيها.

<sup>1</sup>A: أحداً <sup>2</sup>B: نبوة أو آية <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>This word is lacking in A, B, C and D; cf. Q 48:16. <sup>5</sup>B:

صلعم <sup>6</sup>B: ويسلمون <sup>7</sup>So in A and B; C and D: يغيّر (wrongly). <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم

rule, made their religion strong for them and replaced fear with security for them. What miracle or prophecy is truer or clearer than these?

From it are his words: 'He it is Who hath sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religion, however much the idolaters may be averse'.<sup>129</sup> God and his messenger (peace be upon him) proved to be right, his religion has triumphed over every religion, and the people of every faith have yielded to him.

From it are his words: 'Say unto those of the wandering Arabs who were left behind: Ye will be called against a folk of mighty prowess, to fight them until they surrender; and if ye obey, Allah will give you a fair reward; but if ye turn away as ye did turn away before, He will punish you with a painful doom'.<sup>130</sup> These were people who stayed away from the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and he hinted to them that they would fight against the Byzantines and the Persians, or they made the act of submitting. It happened | as in the Qur'ān, and those who saw it bore witness to its truthfulness.

19v

What can opponents say about these prophecies, and what rejoinders and arguments will they be able to use against them when they are vindicated, fulfilled and scattered and spread through east and west? If anyone should treat this lightly, not think it enough and insist upon refuting it and disproving it, he will only humiliate himself, will only anger his Lord, will only cheat his fate, and will not be able to find for us anything in his books other than similar things to it.

Concerning the reports that have come down about which there is no doubt, are the words of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), 'I have five names, I am Muḥammad, Aḥmad, the Abolisher, for God abolishes unbelief by me, the Gatherer, for I gather people, and the Final One, for I am the last of the prophets'.<sup>131</sup> His words were truthful (peace be upon him): God brought prophecies to a close with him, he effaced unbelief by him, that is he subdued it, reduced it, abolished it from the navel and heart of the earth—a trace of it remaining in its corners and margins.

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129 Q 9:33.

130 Q 48:16.

131 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/41>.

ورُوي أنّه كان على جبل فتحرّك الجبل فقال له: <sup>1</sup> "اسكنْ، فما عليك إلّا نبيّ أو صديق <sup>2</sup> أو شهيد". <sup>3</sup> وكان معه أبو بكر فسُمي صديقاً، وعمر <sup>4</sup> وعثمان فاستشهدا <sup>5</sup> بعده. <sup>6</sup>

وأنّه عليه السلام <sup>7</sup> كان يقول لأصحابه: "أنا فرطكم على الحوض"، أي أتقدّمكم، والفرارط المتقدّم، فقبضه الله قبلهم.

وقال عليه السلام <sup>8</sup> لفاطمة رضي الله عنها في مرضته التي مات فيها: "إنّك أسرع أهلي لحوقاً بي"، فكانت أوّل من مات من أهله بعده.

وقال لعليّ بن أبي طالب رضوان الله عليه: "لتخضبنّ هذه من هذا"، وأشار إلى لحيته ورأسه، وأنّ عليّاً اعتلّ بعده علّة شديدة فقال له أهله: "قد تخوفنا عليك من مرضتك هذه"، قال: <sup>9</sup> "لكنّي لا أخافها لأنّ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلّم <sup>10</sup> قال: "لتخضبنّ هذه من هذا"، فكان كذلك، عوفي من مرضته تلك <sup>11</sup> ثمّ ضرب على رأسه بالسيف فقتل.

وقال عليه السلام لعثمان: "إنّ الله سيقمّصك قيصاً وإنّهم حاملوك على خلعه فلا تفعل". فلما حُصر عثمان وقالوا له اخلع الخلافة قال لهم: "إنّ النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم <sup>12</sup> قال لي كيت وكيت ولستُ فاعلاً ما تقولون"، فقتل.

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; this word is lacking in A, C and D. <sup>2</sup>C and D: وصديق <sup>3</sup>C and D: وشهيد; a

note in the margin in A reads: رواه البخاري. <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B: فاستشهد <sup>6</sup>A note in the

margin in A reads: رضي الله عنهما. <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: وقال <sup>10</sup>B: صلعم <sup>11</sup>D: هذه <sup>12</sup>B:

صلعم

It has been related that he was on a mountain that moved, so he told it, 'Be still, for upon you are no less than a prophet, an upright man and a martyr.' For with him were Abū Bakr, who was called 'Upright', 'Umar and 'Uthmān, both of whom were martyred after him.

He (peace be upon him) used to say to his Companions, 'I will precede you to the pool',<sup>132</sup> which is to say, 'I will go before you', for the one who precedes is the one who goes before. And God took him to himself before them.

He (peace be upon him) said to Fāṭima (may God be pleased with her) in his illness during which he died, 'You will be the soonest of my family to follow me.'<sup>133</sup> And she was the first of his family to die after him.

He said to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (God's pleasure be upon him), 'This will be tinged with that'; and he pointed to his beard and head. After him 'Alī was affected by a serious illness, and his family said | to him, 'We are alarmed for you because of this illness you have.' He said, 'But I am not alarmed about it because the Messenger of God (may God bless him and give him peace) said: "This will be tinged with that".' And this was so: he was cured of this illness, but then he was struck on the head with a sword and killed.<sup>134</sup>

20r

He (peace be upon him) said to 'Uthmān, 'God will dress you in a shirt, and they will tempt you to take it off, but do not.' So when 'Uthmān was besieged and they said to him, 'Take off the caliphate', he said to them, 'The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) said to me such and such, so I will not do what you say', and he was killed.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Related to al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/46450>.

<sup>133</sup> E.g. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/44/142>.

<sup>134</sup> According to early accounts, the Caliph 'Alī died as a result of a sword blow to his head while he was leading prayers.

<sup>135</sup> This summarises the traditional account of 'Uthmān's death in Medina.

وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> لعمّار بن ياسر: "تقتلك الفئة الباغية"، فقتل في حرب<sup>2</sup> بين علي ومعاوية، فكان معاوية لا ينكر الحديث لكنه يقول: "ليس أجنادي الذين قتلوه وإنما قتله من غره وأخرجه إلى القتال".

وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>3</sup> للزبير بن العوام: "إنك تقاتل علياً وأنت ظالم له".<sup>4</sup> ففعل وقرّعه عليّ بذلك.

وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> لإمرأته عائشة رضي الله عنها: "إنك ستنبج عليك كلاب الحوَب"، فلما سارت إلى البصرة سمعت نباحاً وهي تسير ليلاً فسألت عن الموضوع فقالوا: "ماء يقال له الحوَب"، فذكرت قوله عليه السلام<sup>6</sup> فاسترجعت وندمت على ما كان من خروجها.

وكان عليه السلام<sup>7</sup> يقول في الحسن بن عليّ عليهما السلام: "إنّ إبنی هذا سيّد وسيصلح الله به بين فئتين من المسلمين".

وقال عليه السلام: "زُويت لي الأرض حتى رأيتُ | مشارقها ومغاربها وسيبلغ ملك أمّتي إلى حيث زوي لي منها"، ومعنى زوي أي جمع.

وأنّه أخذ يوم الخندق المعول وضرب به كديّة كانت استصعبت على من يحفر فخرجت منها نار فقال عليه السلام: "لقد رأيتُ من بين هذه النار مدائن كسرى". ثمّ ضرب ضربةً أخرى فخرجت نار فقال: "لقد رأيتُ من بينها مدائن قيصر وليفتحنها<sup>10</sup> الله على أمّتي من بعدي".<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>C and D: بحرب (wrongly). <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم

<sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B omits: عليهما السلام. <sup>9</sup>B: صلعم <sup>10</sup>So in A and B; C and D: وليمنحنها <sup>11</sup>B omits:

من بعدي.



He said (may God bless him and give him peace) to ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, ‘An unjust band will kill you,’<sup>136</sup> and he was killed during the fighting between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya. Mu‘āwiya would not deny the tradition, but he used to say, ‘It was not my troops who killed him, but the one who deceived him and made him go out to the battle.’

He said (may God bless him and give him peace) to Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām, ‘You will fight against ‘Alī and you will be acting unjustly towards him.’ He did this, and ‘Alī rebuked him for it.’<sup>137</sup>

He said (may God bless him and give him peace) to his wife ‘Ā’isha (may God be pleased with her), ‘The dogs of al-Ḥaw’ab will bark against you.’ When she went to Baṣra she heard barking during her night journey. She inquired about the place, and they said, ‘A watering-place called al-Ḥaw’ab.’ She recalled his words (peace be upon him) and recited ‘The Recall,’<sup>138</sup> and she regretted her reason for going there.<sup>139</sup>

He used to say (peace be upon him) about al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī (peace be upon them both), ‘This child of mine is my descendant and through him God will reconcile two groups of Muslims.’<sup>140</sup>

He said (peace be upon him), ‘The earth was concentrated down for me so that I could see | its eastern and western parts. And the rule of my community will reach as far as the point from which it has been concentrated down’—the meaning of ‘concentrated down’ is ‘collected together’.<sup>141</sup>

20v

On the day of Khandaq he took a pick-axe and struck with it a rock which was too hard for those who were digging it out. Sparks came out from it, and he said (peace be upon him), ‘Within these sparks I saw the cities of Chosroes.’ Then he struck another blow and sparks came out; he said, ‘Within these I saw the cities of Caesar. And God will definitely conquer them for my community after me.’<sup>142</sup>

136 Al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘*, <http://sunnah.com/urn/636840>.

137 A telling reference to the Battle of the Camel during ‘Alī’s caliphate.

138 Q 2:156: ‘Lo! we are Allah’s and lo! unto Him we are returning’.

139 See Abū Ja’far al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, pp. 3109–3110, 3126–3127/trans. A. Brockett, *The community divided (The history of al-Ṭabarī 16)*, Albany NY, 1997, pp. 50–51, 68–69.

140 Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/abudawud/42/67>.

141 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/54/24>.

142 Al-Nasā’ī, *Sunan*, <http://sunnah.com/nasai/25/92>.

ويُروى أنه عليه السلام كان<sup>1</sup> إذا رجع من سفرة<sup>2</sup> بدأ بالمسجد فصلى ركعتين ثم أتى فاطمة رضي الله عنها. فأتاها عند منصرفه من الخندق فجعلت تبكي وتلثم فاه، فقال لها: "ما لك يا فاطمة تبكين؟". قالت: "يا رسول الله أراك شعثاً نصباً قد اخلولقت ثيابك". قال: "يا فاطمة إن الله بعث أباك بأمر لا يبقي على وجه الأرض<sup>3</sup> بيت أو شعر إلا أدخل فيه عزراً أو ذلاً حتى يبلغ حيث بلغ الليل".

وروي عن أنس بن مالك أنه قال: "كنت مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> في حائط فسمعت قرع الباب، فقال لي: قم يا أنس، افتح له الباب وبشره بالجنة، وأخبره أنه يلي أمر أمي من بعدي، فذهبت، فإذا أنا بأبي بكر رضي الله عنه فبشرته وأعلمته ما سمعت<sup>6</sup> وانصرفت، فقرع الباب قارع آخر، فقال: قم وافتح له الباب وبشره بالجنة وبأنه يلي أمر أمي من بعد أبي بكر، ففتحت، فإذا أنا بعمر رضي الله عنه، ففعلت ما أمرت به. ثم سمعت قرع الباب، فقال لي عليه السلام: قم وافتح له الباب وبشره بالجنة وبولاية أمر الأمة بعد عمر، فإذا أنا بعثمان رضي الله عنه".

21r

وروي عنه عليه السلام أنه كان يقول: "لا تقوم الساعة حتى تروا أقواماً كأن وجوههم المجان المطرقة"، وأنه كان<sup>7</sup> صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>8</sup> يقول: "أي بلدانكم حرشة؟" ف قيل له: "خراسان"، قال: "ستفتح عليكم من بعدي". وما يشك أحد من أبناء هذه الدولة العباسية وغيرهم أن أبا مسلم خرج وهو غير شاك في أن الغلبة والخلافة لأهل هذا البيت، وأنه لما قرب<sup>10</sup> من الحيرة، وجه من يسأل عمن كان فيها من بني العباس، فلما رآهم الرسول قال: "أيكم ابن الحارثية؟"، وهو أبو العباس

<sup>1</sup>B: كان عليه السلام <sup>2</sup>B: (أو سفرة) <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>B adds: لي (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>B:

صلعم <sup>6</sup>D: سمعته <sup>7</sup>B, C and D omit this word. <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: فقال <sup>10</sup>So in A and B; C and D:

اقترب

It is related that when he (peace be upon him) returned from a journey, he would immediately go to the mosque and pray two *rak'as* and go to Fāṭima (may God be pleased with her). He went to her after leaving the ditch, and she started crying and kissing his mouth. He said to her, 'Fāṭima, what is it, you are crying?' She said, 'Messenger of God, I can see you unkempt and exhausted, and your clothes worn through.' He said, 'Fāṭima, God has sent your father the instruction that he leaves no dwelling on the face of the earth, of clay or of hair, on which he has not bestowed power or powerlessness—may the coming be like the coming of night.'<sup>143</sup>

It is related from Anas ibn Malik that he said, 'I was with the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) in an enclosure and I heard knocking at the door. He said to me: "Up Anas, open the door for him. Give him good news about paradise, and tell him that he will govern my community after me." I went, and there was Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him), and I gave him the good news and the information that I had heard, and I turned away. Then someone else knocked at the door, and he said, "Up and open the door for him, and give him good news about paradise and that he will govern my community after Abū Bakr." I opened it, and there was 'Umar (may God be pleased with him), so I did what I had been ordered. Then I heard knocking at the door, and he said (peace be upon him) to me: "Up and open the door for him, and give him good news about paradise and governing the community | after 'Umar." And there was 'Uthmān (may God be pleased with him).'<sup>144</sup>

21r

It is related from him (peace be upon him) that he used to say, 'The Hour will not come until you see people whose faces are two-layered shields,'<sup>145</sup> and that he (peace be upon him) used to say, 'Which of your countries is harshest?', and he was told, 'Khurāsān'. He said, 'It will prevail for you after me.' And none of the descendants of this 'Abbasid dynasty nor any others doubt that Abū Muslim revolted because he was in no doubt that the victory and the caliphate should go to the people of this house. When he approached al-Ḥīra he sent someone to ask who from the descendants of al-'Abbās was there. When the messenger saw them he said, 'Which of you is Ibn al-Ḥārithiyya?'—it was Abū al-'Abbās,<sup>146</sup>

143 Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 6, implying that the turn of Muḥammad's fortunes will be as certain as night follows day.

144 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/44/44>.

145 E.g. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/56/141>.

146 Abū al-'Abbās al-Saffāh, the first 'Abbasid caliph (r. 750–754), great great grandson of al-'Abbās, the uncle of Muḥammad. His mother was from the Ḥārith tribe, making him the 'son of the Ḥārith woman'.

أمير المؤمنين غفر الله له، لأنه كان في الحديث أن أول من يستخلف ابن الحارثية لا يشكون فيه. وأعجب من هذا أن بني أمية لم يكونوا يشكون في أن الخلافة صائرة إلى أهلها من أهل هذا البيت، فكانوا يقتلونهم ويطلبونهم تحت كل حجر. وكان أهل خراسان يرسلون إليهم الرسل وهم بالشرأة تأملًا لهم، ويدعون إليهم<sup>2</sup> ولا يشكون في أمرهم حتى قتل منهم من قتل. ثم ظهر الأمر في الوقت الذي قدر الله أن يظهر بأحاديث مأثورة.

ولقد بلغنا أنه ورد على أبي العباس—رحمه<sup>3</sup> الله—فتح اليمن والسند في يوم واحد، فأظهر اغتصاباً شديداً بذلك، فقال له أهل بيته: "يا أمير المؤمنين إنه يوم سرور، فما هذا الحزن؟" فقال لهم: "أنسيتم الحديث المأثور عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup>: "إن من أئمة مفاتيح<sup>5</sup> اليمن والسند في يوم واحد فقد حضر أجله"، فحم من يومه ومات بعد أيام.

وروي عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>6</sup> أنه كتب إلى كسرى وقيصر كتابين دعاهما إلى الإسلام وبدأ بنفسه. فوضع قيصر كتابه على الوسادة وأجابه بجواب حسن، وأما كسرى فإنه مرّق كتابه، وكتب إلى فيروز الديلمي وهو باليمن يأمره بالمسير إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>7</sup> وأخذه وقتله، فقال: "اللهم مرّق ملكه"، فتمزّق ملكه كما ترون. وسار إليه فيروز وأعلم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بما قد أمر به فيه. فقال له النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>8</sup>: "إن ربي أعلمني أنه قد قتل ربك فأمسك عني حتى يصحّ عندك الخبر". فأتاهم الخبر بذلك وأسلم فيروز لما رأى وسمع ودعا من كان باليمن من أبناء<sup>9</sup> الفرس إلى الإسلام فأسلموا. فلما خرج باليمن الكذاب العنسي

<sup>1</sup>So in A and B; C and D: تأملاً <sup>2</sup>C and D omit: ويدعون إليهم <sup>3</sup>B: نعمه <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>So in B;

أولاد <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: أولاد <sup>6</sup>B: فتح فاتح illegible in A; C and D:

Commander of the Faithful (may God grant him forgiveness)—for it is in the Ḥadīth that the first who would have the caliphate was Ibn al-Ḥārithiyya, and about this they did not doubt. But even more amazing than this is that the Umayyads did not doubt that the caliphate would pass to her family from the family of that house. So they killed them, searching them out beneath every stone, while the people of Khurāsān sent messengers to them when they were in al-Sharāh to expect them, calling to them, and not doubting their cause, even though some of them were killed. Then the cause was made manifest at the time decreed by God for it to be manifest through widely-received traditions.

We have heard that news reached Abū al-‘Abbās (may God have mercy on him) of the capture of Yemen and Sind on the same day. At this he showed great agitation, so the people of his house said to him, ‘Commander of the faithful, this is a day of joy, so why this sadness?’ He said to them, ‘Have you forgotten the Ḥadīth received from the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace): If anyone conquers | Yemen and Sind on the same day, his end is near?’ He grew feverish from that day, and he died a few days later.

21V

It is related from the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) that he wrote to Chosroes and Caesar two letters calling them to Islam, beginning with himself.<sup>147</sup> Caesar placed his letter on a cushion and sent a polite reply. But Chosroes tore up his letter and wrote to Fayrūz the Daylamī who was in Yemen, ordering him to go to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and seize him and kill him. He said, ‘O God, tear up his kingdom’, and his kingdom was torn up, as you can see. Fayrūz went to him and informed the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) of what he had been ordered about him. The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) said to him, ‘My Lord has informed me that your lord has been killed, so keep off me until you have proved that report true.’ Then the report of this reached them, and because of what Fayrūz heard and saw he became a Muslim. He called the Persians who were in Yemen to Islam and they became Muslim. When al-‘Ansī

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147 He began each letter with his own name.

يَدْعِي النُّبُوَّةَ كَتَبَ إِلَيْهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>1</sup> يَأْمُرُهُ بِقَتْلِهِ، فَدَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ فَيُرِزُ وَهُوَ نَائِمٌ وَلَوْ عَنَقَهُ وَدَقَّهَا فَقَتَلَهُ.

وقال عليه السلام: "إنَّ هذا الأمر لا يزال في قريش"، يعني الخلافة.

وقال صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>2</sup> لِلْعَبَّاسِ عَمَّهُ وَقَدْ أَتَاهُ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ، رَحْمَةً<sup>3</sup> اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا، صَغِيرًا: "إنَّ هذا سيكون من أُمَّةٍ وَأَعْلَهُمُ بِالتَّأْوِيلِ وَالتَّنْزِيلِ"، ودعاه وتفل في فيه وقال: "اللَّهُمَّ فَفِهِهِ فِي الدِّينِ وَعَلَيْهِ التَّأْوِيلُ"، فكان كما قال وَسُمِّيَ لَذلكَ "الخبر".

22r ومن الدلائل على ما يُوجب الله للنبيِّ عليه السلام | وللمؤمنين به ما جاء في الأحاديث المشهورة الشائعة من استسقاء عمر بن الخطاب بالعبَّاس بن عبد المطلب رضي الله عنهما عام الرمادة. فَإِنَّهُ أَخَذَ بِيَدِهِ وَتَقَدَّمَ وَقَالَ: "اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا جِئْنَاكَ لِنَسْتَسْقِيكَ<sup>4</sup> وَنَسْتَشْفَعُ إِلَيْكَ بِعَمِّ نَبِيِّكَ". فَمَا بَرَحُوا حَتَّى ارْتَفَعَتْ سَحَابَةٌ ثُمَّ أُرْسِلَتْ مَطَرًا جَوْدًا.

وكان يقول لأصحابه: "والذي بعثني بالحقِّ لئن كنتم أمسيتم وضعاء لتشرقن حتى تصيروا نجوماً يهتدي بكم المهتدون". وَيُقَالُ إِنَّ فُلَانًا حَدَّثَ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>5</sup> وَقَالَ عَنْهُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، فَقَدْ تَرَوْنَ ذَلِكَ كَمَا قَالَ.

وَرُوِيَ أَنَّ عِكْرَمَةَ بْنَ أَبِي جَهْلٍ قَتَلَ فِي الْحَرْبِ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ، وَعِكْرَمَةُ يَوْمئِذٍ مُشْرِكٌ فَتَبَسَّمَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>6</sup>، فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ: "يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، تَبَسَّمتَ أَنْ قَتَلَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ قَوْمِكَ رَجُلًا مَنَا؟". قَالَ: "لَا وَلَكِنْ تَبَسَّمتُ لِأَنَّهُمَا جَمِيعًا<sup>7</sup> فِي دَرَجَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ". فَأَسْلَمَ عِكْرَمَةُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ وَاسْتَشْهَدَ فِي وَقْعَةٍ.

يَجْتَمِعَانِ 7B: صَلَعَم 6B: صَلَعَم 5B: نَسْتَسْقِيكَ C and D: نَعْمَةٌ 3B: صَلَعَم 2B: صَلَعَم 1B:

the liar appeared in Yemen claiming prophethood, the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) wrote to him and ordered him to kill him.<sup>148</sup> So Fayrūz went in to him when he was asleep and wrenched his neck and struck it, and so he killed him.

He said (peace be upon him), 'This (meaning the caliphate) will always remain among the Quraysh.'<sup>149</sup>

He said (may God bless him and give him peace) to his uncle al-'Abbās, who had brought to him 'Abd Allāh when he was a child (God's mercy be upon both of them), 'He will be the wisest and most knowledgeable of my community in interpretation and revelation.' He called him and spat into his mouth, saying, 'My God, give him wisdom about religion and give him knowledge about interpretation.' It happened as he had said, and because of this he was called 'The Doctor'.<sup>150</sup>

Among the items of evidence of what God conferred upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) and upon believers | in him is what occurs in well-known and widespread Ḥadīths of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb praying for rain in the name of 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (may God be pleased with both of them) in the year of dryness. He took him by the hand, went forward and said, 'O God, we come to pray to you for rain, and to intercede with you through the uncle of your Prophet.' They did not cease until a cloud rose up and sent torrents of rain.

22r

He used to say to his Companions, 'By the One who has sent me with truth, although you may be humble, when you come to evening you will ascend to become stars, and those who are guided will be guided by you. And it will be said: A certain man related from the Messenger of God (God bless him and give him peace) and said from him such and such.' And you may see this as he said.

It is related that 'Ikrima ibn Abī Jahl killed one of the Anṣār in battle, when 'Ikrima was still a polytheist, and the Prophet (God bless him and give him peace) smiled. One of the Anṣār said to him: 'Messenger of God, are you smiling at one of your people killing one of ours?' He said, 'No. I am smiling because they are both in the same rank in paradise.' 'Ikrima became a Muslim after this, and he was martyred in the encounter of Ajnādayn in the territory of the Romans.

148 Al-Aswad al-'Ansī was one of the four best-known prophetic pretenders in the latter years of Muḥammad's life.

149 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/33/4>.

150 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās (d. 687/8), regarded as the founder of Qur'ān commentary, was a direct ancestor of the 'Abbasid dynasty.

أجنادين بالروم وقال عليه السلام لعدي بن حاتم: "أسلم يا عدي تسلم، أظنّ الذي يمنعك يا عدي من ذلك خصاصة تراها بمن حولي، وإنك ترى الناس علينا إلباً واحداً، هل رأيت الحيرة؟". قال: "قلت لا". قال: "يوشك الطعينة أن ترحل بلا جوار حتى تطوف بالبيت. ولتفتحنّ علينا كنوز كسرى بن هرمز ثلاث مرّات". قال عدي: "فلقد رأيتُ جميع ما قال عليه السلام".

22V وقال أبو بكر رضي الله عنه حين ارتدتّ العرب ووجه إليهم بالجيش: "إنّ رسول الله صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> قد وعد المسلمين بالنصر والفتح من الله وأنّ الله يُظهر دينه على كلّ دين ولن يُخلف الله وعده". فقد صدّق الله ظنّه وحقق قول النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>2</sup>، وارتفع الشكّ.

صلعم: <sup>2B</sup> صلعم <sup>1B</sup>



He (peace be upon him) said to ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim,<sup>151</sup> “Adī, become a Muslim and you will be safe. ‘Adī, I think that what holds you back from this is the poverty you see in those around me, when you can see the people who are against us are one force. Have you seen al-Ḥīra?” He said, ‘I said, “No”.’ He said, ‘Before long a woman will be able to ride on a camel without a protector to make the circuit of the House. And indeed the treasures of Chosroes son of Hormiz will be opened to us three times.’<sup>152</sup> ‘Adī said, ‘I have seen all that he said, peace be upon him.’

When the Arabs apostasised and Abū Bakr went against them with the armies, | he (may God be pleased with him) said, ‘The Messenger of God (may God bless him and give him peace) promised the Muslims victory and triumph from God, and that God would manifest his religion above every other. And God will never go back on his promise.’ God has indeed confirmed his belief and proved the Prophet’s word true (may God bless him and give him peace) and doubt has vanished away.

22V

151 This is the ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim al-Ṭā’ī mentioned above, pp. 220–221.

152 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/102>.

## الباب السادس

في أمية النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> وأن الكتاب  
الذي أنزله الله عليه وأنطقه به آية للنبوة

ومن آيات النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>2</sup> هذا القرآن، وإنما صار آية لمعان لم أر أحداً من  
مؤلفي الكتب في هذا الفن فسرها بل أطلق القول والدعوى فيه. وما زلت وأنا  
نصراني أقول ويقول عملي كان من علماء القوم وبلغائهم إن البلاغات ليست  
من آيات النبوة لأنها مشتركة في الأمم كلها، حتى إذا اعتزلت التقليد والألف  
وفارقت لزاز العادة والتربية وتدبرت معاني القرآن علمت أن الأمر فيه كما قال  
أهله، وذلك أي لم أجد لأحد عربي ولا عجمي هندي ولا رومي كتاباً جمع من  
التوحيد والتهليل والثناء على الله عز وجل، والتصديق بالرسول والأنبياء، والحث  
على الصالحات الباقيات، والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر، والترغيب في الجنة  
والترهيد في النار بلغ مبلغ<sup>3</sup> هذا القرآن. منذ كانت الدنيا، فمن جاءنا بكتاب هذه  
نسبته ونعته وله من القلوب هذا المحل والجلالة والحلاوة ومعه هذا النصر<sup>23r</sup> واليمن  
والغلبة؟ وكان صاحبه الذي نزل عليه أمياً لم يعرف كتابة ولا بلاغة قط، فهو من  
آيات النبوة لا شك فيه ولا مرية.

وأيضاً<sup>4</sup> فإني رأيت جميع الكتب المخلدة لا تعدو من<sup>5</sup> أن تكون إما في آداب  
الدنيا وأخبار أهلها وإما في الدين. فأما كتب الآداب والفلسفات<sup>6</sup> والطب، فإن  
غرضها ومغزاها غير هذا الغرض ولن تذكر مع كتب التنزيل والدين<sup>7</sup>. وأما ما كان

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>So in B; smudged and illegible in A; C and D: مثل <sup>4</sup>B: فأيضاً <sup>5</sup>C and D

omit this word. <sup>6</sup>B: والفلسفيات <sup>7</sup>D omits this word.

**On the Prophet's illiteracy (may God bless him and give him peace) and that the Book which God revealed to him and caused him to articulate is a sign of prophetic status**

Among the miracles of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) is the Qur'ān itself. It is a miracle of expressions which I have never seen any author of books on this subject interpret without giving up his words or claim about it. While I was still a Christian, I and an uncle of mine, who was one of the scholars and eloquent experts of the people, used to say that rhetorical figures are not signs of prophethood because they are common among all nations.<sup>153</sup> But when I gave up imitation and custom, and left behind the shackles of habit and upbringing,<sup>154</sup> and I considered the expressions of the Qur'ān, I found out that it was as its people said. This is, that I have never found any book written by an Arab, Persian, Indian or Roman that brings together the declaration that God is one and that there is no other god than him, or praise of him, great and mighty, the attestation of the messengers and prophets, the urging to good works that endure, the command to the good and prohibition of the forbidden or the kindling of the desire for paradise and arousal of the hatred of hell, as does this Qur'ān. Ever since the world has existed, who has delivered to us a book with such an attribution or character as this, which contains the very essence of such appropriateness, exaltedness and refinement, and which is accompanied by such vindication, | success and victory? The one who brought it, on whom it was revealed, was illiterate, and had no knowledge of any writing or eloquence.<sup>155</sup> So it is a sign of prophetic status, without doubt or argument.

23r

Further, I have seen that the books with continuing value all unavoidably concern themselves either with the morals of the world and accounts of its people or with religion. The intention and significance of books on morals, philosophy and medicine are different from this latter intention, and they

153 This interesting autobiographical sidelight shows that earlier in his life 'Alī, together with his uncle, whom he later names as Abū Zakkār Yahyā ibn al-Nu'mān (pp. 434–435), had argued against claims about the inimitability of the Qur'ān based on its literary qualities. These criticisms would have pitted them against many Muslim apologists of the time, though they may have agreed with the Mu'tazili Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām (d. 836 or 845), who argued that it was the Qur'ān's predictions of future events that proved its miraculous nature, and not its style.

154 This suggestion that 'Alī's Christian faith was due to his upbringing includes an intimation that he was never personally convinced of its validity.

155 Q 7:157, 158.

منها في الدين، فأول مسمياتها وموجوداتها التوراة التي في أيدي أهل الكتاب. ونجد عامتها في أنساب بني إسرائيل ومسيرها من مصر وحطها وترحالها وأسماء المنازل التي نزلوها، وفيها مع ذلك سنن وشرائع تبهر العقول ويعجز عنها حول الرجال وطاقاتهم.<sup>1</sup> فأما ما في القرآن من تلك الأخبار فإنما هي تذكير بأيام الله وتمثيل وتحذير وتنذير.

وأما الإنجيل الذي في أيدي النصارى فإن جلّه خبر المسيح ومولده وتصرفه، وآداب مع ذلك حسنة ومواعظ كريمة وحكم جسيمة وأمثال رائعة، وليس فيها من السنن والشرائع والأخبار إلا اليسير القليل.

وأما كتاب الزبور ففيه أخبار وتساييح ومزامير بارعة الحسن فائقة الحلاوة، وليس فيها شيء من السنن والشرائع. وأما كتاب أشعيا وأرميا وغيرهما من الأنبياء فجّلّها لعن لبني إسرائيل وبشارات بالخزي المعدّ لهم، وإزالة النعم عنهم وإنزال النقم والسطوات بهم، وهنات سوى ذلك | قد تجنّأها<sup>2</sup> وطعن عليها الزنادقة الخبيثة<sup>3</sup> وقالوا إنّ الحكيم الرحيم يتعالى عن أن يُوحى بمثلها ويأمر بما فيها من رشّ الدماء على المذابح وعلى ثياب الكهنة والأئمة، وإحراق العظام وذكر الرفوث والفروث وما أشبهه، واتباع الغضب والسخطات والإستئنان بالجلاء عن البيوت إذا تلمّعت جدرانها بالبياض، لأنّ ذلك برص يعتري البيوت. وما أمر به قوم منهم بأن يمشي بعضهم إلى بعض مصلتين وأن يتجادوا صابرين حتى يتفانوا ضرباً وخطاً. ففعل القوم ذلك ولم يعصوا، وأجابوا إلى التفاني والاستقتال ولم يمتنعوا. ومن سارع إلى مثلها فهو مطيع وليس بعاص، ووليّ وليس بعدو، ولا يستحقّ الأولياء وأهل الطاعة أن يؤمروا بالتفاني والتقتيل.

والخبيثة: <sup>3</sup>B: (؟) لسن C and D: وطاقاتهم <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: <sup>1</sup>C and D:

should not be mentioned alongside books of revelation and religion. Those that are on religion, the first of them in name and existence is the Torah, which is in the possession of the People of the Book. We find that in general it is about the genealogies of the People of Israel, their journeying from Egypt, their halts and departures, the names of the places at which they stopped, and in addition it contains customs and laws which dazzle the intellects and by which human ability and capabilities are rendered powerless. What the Qurʾān contains of these reports is no more than a reminder of God's merciful acts, parables, cautions and warnings.

The greater part of the Gospel, which is in the possession of the Christians, is the account of Christ, his birth and his activities, together with refined moral precepts, noble counsels, immense wisdom and impressive parables, though containing no customs, laws or historical accounts, except for a little that is brief.

In the Book of Psalms are historical accounts, hymns of praise and psalms consummate in beauty and outstanding in loveliness, but containing nothing about customs and laws. The greater part of the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and other prophets are condemnations of the People of Israel, foretellings of the disgrace destined for them, the departure of grace from them, the visiting of vengeance and assaults upon them, and things like these. | The wicked Manicheans<sup>156</sup> have vociferously censured them and said that the wise, merciful One is too exalted to reveal such things as these or to command such matters in them as the sprinkling of blood on the altars and the garments of the priests and leaders,<sup>157</sup> the burning of bones, the mention of obscenities and refuse and similar matters, the continuation of anger and resentment, the practice of abandoning houses if their walls show a hint of white because there is leprosy affecting them,<sup>158</sup> people among them being ordered to advance, one group against another with swords unsheathed, and to fight against one another, continuing until they wiped one another out by striking and beating. The people did this without resistance and yielded to being wiped out and the danger of death without holding back.<sup>159</sup> Those who hastened to do such things were obedient and not resistant, friends and not enemies. But friends and obedient people should not be ordered to wipe one another out or cause slaughter.

23v

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156 Literally *zanādiqa*.

157 See e.g. Exodus 29:20–21.

158 Leviticus 14:33–48, though there the infection is reddish or greenish in colour.

159 Exodus 32:27–29.

ثم أمرهم موسى عليه السلام أن يأتوا جبلين متقاربين، ويصعد أحد الجبلين ستة أحياء منهم، ويصعد ستة أحياء الجبل الآخر، وأن يقرأ قوم منهم نواميس التوراة التي لا يحملها الرجال ولا الجبال ناموساً ناموساً سنة سنة ويقولون: "إن من خالف هذه النواميس وقصر فيها وأضاع شيئاً منها فهو ملعون"، وتجاوبهم القبائل التي على الجبل الآخر بالتأمين لأولئك اللاعنين بأعلى أصواتهم فلم يدع أحداً منهم إلا عمه باللعنة، وحملهم على أن يلعنوا أعقابهم من بعدهم مجتهدين<sup>1</sup> طائعين في ذلك كله غير مخالفين، فصاروا<sup>2</sup> إلى البوار من قبل أن يستقر بهم<sup>3</sup> الدار، وإلى اللعنة الشاملة من قبل أن يريحوا راحة الغلبة والسعة.

24r

وفي مثل قول حزقيال النبي أن الله أمره أن يحلق رأسه ولحيته بسيف صارم حاداً، ومثل قول هوشاع النبي أن الله أمره أن يتزوج بامرأة مشهورة بالزنا فولدت له ابنين، وأمره أن يسمي أحدهما "لا أرحم"، والثاني "ليسوا حزبي"، ليعلم بنو إسرائيل أنني لا أرحمهم ولا اعتد بهم أولياء<sup>4</sup> وحزباً. وقال هوشاع عن الله في اليهود: "إن أمهم زانية وأنهم ولدوا لغير رشدة". وقول بعض الأنبياء لليهود عن الله: "إن أمكم أعجبها<sup>5</sup> ذكور أهل مصر". وقال أشعيا وخطب على بني إسرائيل بخطبة<sup>6</sup> ثم قال: "إن قائل ذلك هو الرب الذي نوره بصهيون وتوره ببيت المقدس".

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B: فساروا <sup>3</sup>B: ب (sic). <sup>4</sup>This word is repeated in B. <sup>5</sup>C and D: أعجبها

<sup>6</sup>B omits this word.

Then Moses (peace be upon him) ordered them to go to two mountains opposite one another, for six tribes to ascend one of them and six tribes to ascend the other, and for people among them to read out the injunctions of the Torah injunction by injunction and usage by usage—which neither a human nor the mountains could bear—and say, ‘Whoever violates these regulations, or is careless about them or lets any part of them slip, will be accursed.’ The tribes who were on the other mountain answered ‘Amen’ to those who were cursing at the top of their voices. He did not omit any of them from inclusion in the curse. He incited them to curse others who came after them, to do it with vigour, obedient in all of it, and not dissenting.<sup>160</sup> So they fell into ruin before any of their homes could be settled into and to total condemnation before they could scent | the smell of victory or comfort.

24r

Similar are the words of the prophet Ezekiel that God ordered him to shave his head and beard with a sharp, keen sword;<sup>161</sup> and also the words of the prophet Hosea that God ordered him to marry a woman notorious for fornication. She bore him two sons, and he ordered him to call one of them ‘I will not have mercy’, and the second ‘They are not followers of mine’, ‘so that the People of Israel will know that I will not have mercy on them and will not count them as friends or followers’.<sup>162</sup> Hosea said from God about the Jews, ‘Their mother was an adulteress, and they were born from an illegitimate union.’ The words of one of the prophets from God about the Jews are, ‘Your mother took delight in the virility of the men of Egypt.’<sup>163</sup> Isaiah, who preached a sermon against the People of Israel, afterwards said, ‘It is the Lord who says this, whose light is on Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem.’<sup>164</sup>

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160 Joshua 8:30–35, conflated with the more detailed account in Deuteronomy 27:11–26.

161 Ezekiel 5:1.

162 Hosea 1:2–6.

163 Ezekiel 16:26.

164 Isaiah 31:9.

فَأَمَّا الْقُرْآنَ فَلَنْ يَجِدَ فِيهِ حَرْفٌ مِّمَّا يَشْبَهُ ذَلِكَ بَلْ هُوَ مَنْسُوجٌ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ وَالتَّهْلِيلِ  
وَالْتَحَامِيدِ وَالسَّنَنِ وَالشَّرَائِعِ وَالْخَبَرِ وَالْأَثَرِ وَالْوَعْدِ وَالْوَعِيدِ وَالرَّغْبَةِ وَالرَّهْبَةِ  
وَالنَّبَوَاتِ وَالْبَشَارَاتِ بِالْأُمُورِ الْجَمِيلَةِ الَّتِي تَلِيْقُ بِجَلَالِ اللَّهِ وَحِكْمَتِهِ وَطَوْلِهِ وَبَسْطِ  
الْأَمَلِ فِي الْغُفْرَانِ وَالرَّأْفَةِ وَقَبُولِ التَّوْبَةِ وَالْمَعَانِي الَّتِي تَرْتَاحُ لَهَا الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَسْتَرِيحُ  
إِلَيْهَا الْآمَالُ فَلَا تَقْنَطُ، بَلْ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾، ﴿وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ  
الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾، وَيَقُولُ: ﴿يَا عِبَادِي الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ  
رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾.

24V ولذلك استحقَّ أَنْ يُقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا الْكِتَابَ آيَةٌ | مِنْ آيَاتِ النُّبُوَّةِ إِذْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ  
ظَيْرٌ مِذْ خُلِقَ الْخَلْقُ وَخُطِّ فِي الرِّقِّ، وَإِنَّهُ لِيَشْتَمِلُ عَلَى فِضَائِلٍ أُخْرَى بَاهِرَةٍ  
ذَاتِ أَنْوَارٍ وَأَسْرَارٍ وَهِيَ: أَنَّ تِلْكَ الْكُتُبَ، بَلْ هَذِهِ الَّتِي لِلْحِكَمَاءِ خَاصَّةً، إِنَّمَا أَلْفَهَا  
قَوْمٌ أَدْبَاءُ عُلَمَاءُ بَعْدَ تَخَرُّجٍ<sup>2</sup> وَارْتِيَاظٍ، وَبَعْدَ أَنْ نَشَأُوا فِي الْمَدَنِ وَسَمِعُوا الْأَخْبَارَ  
وَتَأَفَّنُوا الْعُلَمَاءَ. فَأَمَّا<sup>3</sup> النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ،<sup>4</sup> فَلَمْ يَكُنْ كَذَلِكَ، بَلْ أُمِّيَّ أَبْطَحِيَّ  
لَمْ يَسْمَعْ مِنْ مِصْرِيِّ قَطُّ<sup>5</sup> وَلَا رُومِيٍّ وَلَا هِنْدِيٍّ وَلَا فَارِسِيٍّ، وَلَا اخْتَلَفَ إِلَى  
مَجَالِسِ الْأَدْبَاءِ لَطَلَبِ أَدَبٍ وَقِرَاءَةِ كِتَابٍ، وَجَاءَ بِكَلَامٍ يَهْرُ أَهْلَ اللُّغَةِ وَغَمَرُ  
أَهْلَ الْفَصَاحَةِ وَالسَّلَاطَةِ، وَخَضَعَتْ لَهُ رِقَابُ الْأُمَّةِ، فَإِنَّهُ قَالَ عَنْ اللَّهِ عَزَّ  
وَجَلَّ: ﴿قُلْ فَاتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ مِثْلَهُ مَفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَأَدْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾، وَقَالَ: ﴿قُلْ فَاتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلَهُ وَأَدْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ  
اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾. فَمَا كَانَ فِي<sup>7</sup> الْقَوْمِ مَنْ تَزَمَّرَ وَنَطَقَ بَلْ بَصَبَصُوا وَأَدْعَنُوا  
وَدَانُوا.

<sup>1</sup>This word is written in the same hand above the line in A; it is lacking in C and D. <sup>2</sup>Reading

with B; illegible in A; C and D: تفكّر<sup>3</sup> وأما<sup>4</sup> B: صلعم<sup>5</sup> C and D omit this word. <sup>6</sup>B: تعالى (in

place of عزّ وجلّ). <sup>7</sup>So in A; corrected in B in the same hand above the line from بين



Now, as for the Qur'ān, not a single word like this can be found in it, but it is woven through with the declaration of God's oneness, assertions that there is no god but him, high praises of him, customs and laws, reports and narratives, the promise and the threat, hungering and alarming, prophecies and foretellings of attractive things which conform to God's glory, wisdom and might, the extending of hope in forgiveness, pity and the acceptance of repentance, and expressions by which souls can find rest and in which hopes can take refuge without losing heart. For God says in it: 'Allah is forgiving, merciful',<sup>165</sup> 'Who forgiveth sins save Allah only?',<sup>166</sup> and he says 'Say: O my slaves who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of Allah, Who forgiveth all sins. Lo! He is the forgiving, the merciful'.<sup>167</sup>

For this reason it is right to say that this Book is one of | the signs of prophethood, because it has had no equal since the beginning of creation and writing on the page. It also includes other brilliant excellences which are light and mystery typified, for other books apart from this, such as those from philosophers in particular, were written by people who were learned and scholarly following graduation and training, and after they were formed in the cities, took in information and followed scholarly men. However, the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) was never like this, but an illiterate *Abṭaḥī*.<sup>168</sup> He never learned from an Egyptian, Roman, Indian or Persian. He did not participate in gatherings of men of learning in order to learn letters and book reading, though he produced arguments to bedazzle grammarians and inundate masters of eloquence and verbal artifice. The members of the Islamic community submitted to him, for he said from God, great and mighty, 'Say: Then bring ten suras, the like thereof, invented, and call on everyone ye can beside Allāh, if ye are truthful!';<sup>169</sup> and 'Say: Then produce a sura of the like thereof, and call your witness beside Allāh if ye are truthful'.<sup>170</sup> But no one among the people murmured or spoke; they gazed instead in loving admiration, they yielded and obeyed.

24v

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165 Q 3:129.

166 Q 3:135.

167 Q 39:53.

168 The Abṭaḥ were a clan of the Quraysh in Makka, and *Abṭaḥī* was one of the names of the Prophet.

169 Q 11:13.

170 Q 2:23.

وقد يحتج علماء أهل الذمة بأن النبي عليه السلام<sup>1</sup> كان أمياً وأن الله لا يخل على أنبيائه برسم الكتابة إذ كان أحسن ما اختصهم به وأقل ما علمهم من غيبه وآياته، والجواب<sup>2</sup> فيه أن الله تعالى<sup>3</sup> خصّ كلّا منهم بما رأى جلّ وعزّ،<sup>4</sup> فمنهم الخطيب البارع مثل داوود، ومنهم التمام والألغ مثل موسى، ومنهم من أحيا الميت دون غيره، ومنهم من فلق البحر وفجر من الصخر ينابيع المياه ولم يعط<sup>5</sup> ا ذلك غيره. ومنهم حكيم كاتب مثل سليمان، ومنهم أمي مثل داوود، فإنه قال في زيوره: "من أجل إنّي لم أعرف الكتابة"، فلم يزر ذلك به كما أنه لم يزر بالمسيح أن لا يكون ملاعب الأسنة أو من رماة الحدق أو لا يكون ماسحاً ولا مهندساً. وكما أنه لم يزر بموسى أن لا يكون لسناً خطيباً أو ماشياً على الهواء وأن لا يكون أبراً الأكمة والأبرص، وأن لم يزر به وبداوود ونظرائهما عليهم السلام، أن لا يكون الله رفعهم<sup>6</sup> إلى السماء كما رفع غيرهم.<sup>7</sup> فليس لقائل أن يقول بخل على فلان النبي بما جاد به لفلان النبي، بل قائل ذلك معاند مارد.

أما ترى أنه لم يعب شمعون الصفا ولا متى ولو قاتلوا الذمة المسيحية عليه السلام بأن لم يكونوا بلغوا مدى فولوس في بلاغته وبيانه؟ وكذلك النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>8</sup> لم يشنه أنه أمي مثل داوود، بل جعل الله ذلك آية باهرة وحجة على من كفر به من قومه إذ كان قد صحّ عند الأمم وأهل الذمة أنه لم يجيء بهذا القرآن بفضل بيان أو<sup>9</sup> حكمة<sup>10</sup> أرضية. ولقد كان عليه السلام موجزاً في كلامه نزوراً يذم المكثار المهذار ويترسل في القول. بلغنا أن عائشة رضي الله عنها كانت تقول: "إنه لم يكن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>11</sup> يسرد الكلام سردكم، كان كلامه نزرًا وأنتم تنثرونه نثرًا.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: فالجواب <sup>3</sup>B: (in place of: جلّ وعزّ) تعالى <sup>4</sup>B: (in place of: جلّ وعزّ) تعالى <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم

<sup>6</sup>Reading with B; A: رفعهما <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: (in place of: جلّ وعزّ) تعالى <sup>9</sup>B: (in place of: جلّ وعزّ) تعالى

<sup>10</sup>B: صلعم وحكمة

The protected people's scholars may object at the Prophet (peace be upon him) being illiterate, that God does not withhold from his prophets the practice of writing, for it is the best thing he could confer on them and the least of his secrets and signs he could teach them. The answer to this is that God the exalted has bestowed upon each of them as he, great and mighty, has seen fit. Among them was the skilful speaker such as David, the stammerer and lisper such as Moses, some who raised the dead unlike any others, and some who parted the sea and broke open the rock so that water gushed forth, and no one else was granted | this. Among them were some who were wise and writers, such as Solomon, and among them were some who were illiterate such as David, 25r for he said in his Psalms, 'because I do not know how to write'.<sup>171</sup> This did not diminish him, just as Christ was not diminished because he was not a practised spear-thrower or expert marksman, nor was he a surveyor or an engineer. And just as it was no diminution to Moses that he was not eloquent as a speaker, or was unable to walk on air, or could not cure the blind or leprous, so it is no discredit to him or David or others like them (peace be upon them) that God did not raise either of them to heaven as he did others. So no one should say that he withheld from any particular prophet what he unstintingly gave to another prophet. Indeed, the person who says this is stubborn and defiant.

Can you not see that neither Simon the Rock, nor Matthew or Luke, disciples of Christ (peace be upon him), were at fault because they could not measure up to Paul in eloquence and verbal ability? In the same way, the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) was not dishonoured in being illiterate like David, but rather God made this a shining sign and proof against those of his people who disbelieved in him, because it has become clear to the communities and protected people that he did not produce this Qur'ān through distinction in verbal ability or earthly wisdom. In his speech he (peace be upon him) was brief and concise, criticising those who babbled a load of nonsense, and he was calm when talking. We have heard that 'Ā'isha (may God be pleased with her) used to say, 'The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) did not go on and on, as you do. His speech was concise while you scatter it about

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171 Psalm 71:15, according to the Peshiṭṭa (M).

25v ولقد ذهب يوماً يتكلم فضاق به فسكت ثم قال: "إنّ هذا البكاء أمر يكون في الأنبياء." و"البكاء" الإقلال من قولهم، "بئر بكية" أي "قليلة الماء"، و"شاة بكية"، إذا كانت منقطعة اللبن.

وسمع عليه السلام واحداً يتشقق ويشقق الكلام، فقال له: "اسكت"، ثم أقبل على من حضر فقال: "قولوا بقولكم ولا يستهوينكم الشيطان، إنّ أحبكم إليّ وأقربكم مني يوم القيامة أحسنكم عملاً، وإنّ أبغضكم إليّ وأبعدكم مني يوم القيامة أسوأكم عملاً، وإنّي أبغض الثرثارين والمتشدّقين والمتفهبين".

فالأمية التي عابه بها أهل الذمة غير مزرية به ولا عاتبة<sup>2</sup> بل حجة وبرهان منير. فلو جاء بمثل هذا الكتاب الذي قد وصفته رجل أديب خطيب لكان كذلك آية من الآيات، فكيف إذا جاء به رجل بدوي أمي؟ فإنّ ذلك يشهد له بأنّ<sup>3</sup> الله أنطقه وروح القدس سدّده له وأعاناه عليه.

أنّ C and D: عاتبة 2C and D: يا الناس قولوا 1B:

carelessly.<sup>172</sup> One day he went to speak but he was ill at ease and fell silent. Then he said, 'This expressing little is something that happens | among the prophets.' And 'expressing little' is their talking little; 'a spring expressing little', namely 'of little water', and 'a ewe expressing little' if its milk does not flow.

25v

He heard (peace be upon him) a man speaking boastfully and over-extravagantly and he told him to be silent. Then he turned to those who were present and said, 'Say what you have to say, and Satan will not then tempt you. Those of you who are dearest to me and the closest of you to me on the Day of Resurrection are those of you who perform the best actions. And those of you who are most abhorrent to me and the furthest of you from me on the Day of Resurrection are those of you who perform the worst actions. I hate the chatters, the boastful and the long-winded.'<sup>173</sup>

So, illiteracy, which the protected people regard as a deficiency in him, is not something that is despicable or blameworthy, but is rather a proof and luminous confirmation. Hence, if someone learned and eloquent could have produced a book such as this which I have described, it would have been a miracle. So what if a man who was from the desert and illiterate produced it? This is a witness to the fact that God had made him utter it, and the holy Spirit<sup>174</sup> had mediated it to him and helped him in it.

<sup>172</sup> Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-shamā'īl al-Muḥammadiyya*, <http://sunnah.com/shamail/34>.

<sup>173</sup> Al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥīn*, <http://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/18/228> (related from al-Tirmidhī).

<sup>174</sup> It is striking that 'Alī readily uses this conventional Muslim term for Gabriel after what must have been years of using it to refer to one of the Persons of the Trinity.

## في أنّ غلبة النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> آية من آيات النبوة

ومن آيات النبيّ عليه السلام هذه الغلبة التي احتجّ بها المسلمون كافة. وقد كنتُ أقول فيها مثل الذي قال غيري من النصارى إنّ الغلبة أمر مشترك في<sup>2</sup> الأمم وما كان مشتركاً فليس بآية من آيات النبوة، حتى إذ أفقتُ من سكرة التيه وهببتُ من سنة الحيرة وانجابت عني فتنة التقليد | علمتُ<sup>3</sup> أنّ ذلك ليس<sup>4</sup> كما قالوا. وذلك<sup>26r</sup> أنّه صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> خرج وحيداً فريداً يتيماً عائلاً كما قال الله عزّ وجلّ: ﴿ألم يجدك يتيماً فأوى ووجدك ضالاً فهدى ووجدك عائلاً فأغنى؟﴾. فدعا العرب قاطبةً والأمم عامةً إلى الإيمان بالله عزّ وجلّ، والناس يرمونه عن قوس واحدة ويزدرون به ويتشاوسون<sup>6</sup> له، فما نهيه ذلك ولا فله، بل باح بالدين ولم ينكفتُ ومضى قدماً لما أمره الله ولم يلتفت. فلما رآهم يبنذون أمره ويتهمونونه ولا يدخلون في دين الله ونعمته طوعاً أدخلهم فيه كرهاً، حتى ظهرت الدعوة ودانت العرب قاطبة، وثنّابت فيهم الآيات والنبوّات واحلولى لهم الدّين وسطع اليقين، فبلغ من حبّهم له بعد البغضة وانقيادهم بعد العداوة ما قد يرون ويسمعون.

فمن ادّعى غلبة كانت باسم الله منذ خلق الله الدنيا؟ لها من الشرائط والمحاسن والدعاء إلى خالق السماء والأرض، والتزهيد في الدنيا والترغيب في الآخرة، والنهي عن الشركاء والأنداد والفواحش والنجاسات. ثمّ ظهرت هذا الظهور والإستعلاء في أقطار الدنيا وآفاقها وبرّها وبحرها، من لدن السّوس الأقصى إلى فيافي الترك والتبتّ بالبكّائين والبهاليل، والإشارة باسم إله إبراهيم وإسماعيل

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم and adds: هي <sup>2</sup>B: بين <sup>3</sup>B: عرفت <sup>4</sup>B adds: كما علمت وأنه ليس <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>C and

ويتشاوشون D:

## That the Prophet's victory (may God bless him and give him peace) is a sign of prophethood

Among the signs of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the victory which all Muslims adduce as evidence. I used to say about it what other Christians said, that victory is something common among the nations, and what is common is not a sign of prophethood. But when I recovered from the drunkenness of deviation, woke up from the slumber of confusion, and the lure of custom vanished away from me, | I came to know that this was not as they said. For he (may God bless him and give him peace) began alone and solitary, an orphan and in need, as God, great and mighty, says: 'Did He not find thee an orphan and protect (thee)? Did He not find thee wandering and direct (thee)? Did He not find thee destitute and enrich (thee)?'<sup>175</sup> He called all the Arabs and every one of the nations to faith in God, great and mighty, while people were shooting at him from one bow, were sneering at him, and looking at him scornfully. But this did not hold him back or deter him, for he unfolded the religion without keeping anything back and went forward to what God ordered him without turning away. But when he saw them rejecting his order and accusing him, and not entering into God's religion and grace voluntarily, he made them enter by force until the preaching prevailed and all the Arabs yielded. Then signs and prophecies followed one another among them, the religion became sweet to them, and certainty shone forth. So their love for him after hatred and their acceptance after hostility reached the point that people could see and hear.

26r

Who has ever claimed such a victory in the name of God since God created the world? It comprises constraints and attractions, invocation of the Creator of heaven and earth, asceticism in the world and attachments to the hereafter, and denial of partners and equals, abominations and filthiness. For this reason it has achieved splendour and superiority through the regions and zones of the world, dry land and sea, from remotest Sūs<sup>176</sup> to the deserts of the Turks and Tibet, through the tearful and the generous, and by reference to the name of the God

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<sup>175</sup> Q 93:6–8.

<sup>176</sup> In Morocco to the far west.

26v وإسحاق ويعقوب وسائر الأنبياء. وكان لدعاته من الزهد في الدنيا والإطراح لأسبابها ورفع الهمم وحسم النفوس عن كل لذة وشهوة، والقنوع بالقوت الممسك | الأمر بالتسوية في القسم والعدل في الحكم حتى لو أن مسلماً مؤمناً قتل ذمياً كافراً قتل المسلم به قوداً وعدلاً. علمنا علماً يقيناً أن تلك الغلبة<sup>1</sup> تقوم مقام آيات النبوات لا محالة.

فأما ما عارضونا به من غلبات الأمم فإنهم إذا فارقوا الأهواء التي تعمي وتصم وميزوا العلل علموا أن غلبة الإسكندر وأردشير بن باباك وغيرهما لم تكن في الله ولا للدعاء إلى الله ولا إلى أنبيائه، بل لطلب الغلبة والعز والسمعة، وهم من بين دهريي أو ثنويي أو وثنيي. فهذه لا تُقاس بغلبة الإسلام وجلالته وإشراقه.

ولهذه الغلبة بينة أخرى كافية شافية وهي أنها لن تخلو من<sup>2</sup> أن تكون من الله أو من الشيطان. فإن أقرروا أنها من الله فالإسلام إذاً حق يجب عليهم قبوله والدخول فيه. وإن زعموا أنها من الشيطان فالشيطان إذاً موافق لله وأنبيائه غير مخالف، ومطيع<sup>3</sup> غير عاص، إذ كان ينصر من دعا إلى الله الفرد الدائم ويظهر دين من أمر بالصوم والصلاة، وينهى عن الفجور والكفر والفحشاء والمنكر، ومن جعل تكبير الله وتجيده وشعاره<sup>4</sup> عند اللقاء ومقدمته عند الزحف<sup>5</sup> وجنته عند المداعسة والجلاد. وإن من ظن بالشيطان أن يعين على إظهار مثل هذا الدين وتأيده فقد أحسن به<sup>6</sup> الظن وقال فيه الجميل وكذب ما قال الله وأنبيؤه فيه. أو<sup>7</sup> كيف يعين الشيطان من دعا إلى | مثل هذا الدين وفيه اجتثاث<sup>8</sup> أصله وانبتات أسبابه وإبادة جميع عبدته ودعاته؟

27r

<sup>1</sup>D: العلبة (wrongly). <sup>2</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>3</sup>B: مطيع <sup>4</sup>C and D: شعاره <sup>5</sup>C: الزحف; D:

الزحف <sup>6</sup>C and D: فيه <sup>7</sup>B: وكيف; C and D: كيف <sup>8</sup>C and D: اجتثاث



of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets. His preachers knew asceticism in the world and rejection of its ties, intensification of afflictions, resolve in their souls against every indulgence and appetite, satisfaction with nourishment and thrift, | and the command to such impartiality in oaths and fairness in judgements that if a Muslim believer were to kill an unbelieving protected person, the Muslim would be killed for this in retaliation and justice. We know with certainty that such a victory is undoubtedly the equivalent of the signs of the rank of prophetic status. 26v

As for the victories of the nations which they throw back at us, if they distanced themselves from the fancies that blind and deafen, and focused on the causes, they would realise that the victory of Alexander, Ardashīr son of Bābak<sup>177</sup> and others was not for God or because of prayer to God or on behalf of his prophets, but in order to obtain conquest, might and reputation. And these people were from among the materialists, dualists<sup>178</sup> and idolaters, so this cannot be compared with the victory, greatness and radiance of Islam.

For this victory there is another clear proof that is sufficient and indubitable. This is that it can only have been from God or from Satan. Now if they acknowledge that it was from God, then Islam is truth, and they must accept it and join it. And if they claim that it was from Satan, then Satan must have been in compliance with God and his prophets with no disagreement, and obedient with no defiance. For he would have been helping those who called upon the one everlasting God and practised the religion of the One who ordered fasting and prayer, and forbade immorality, unbelief, adultery and abomination, who made exaltation and glorification of God his slogan in encounters, his first outcry in advancing, and his protection in set-backs and conflict. Whoever thinks that Satan would help to make known such a religion and to support it certainly has a good opinion about him and speaks well of him, and refutes what God and his prophets say about him. For how could Satan help someone who calls to | such a religion as this, in which his roots are torn out, his opportunities are cut off, and all his followers and advocates are annihilated? 27r

177 Ardashīr I (r. 226–242) was the founder of the Sassanian Empire, overthrowing the Parthian empire and uniting a series of minor kingdoms under single rule.

178 The materialists, *al-dahriyya*, were often explained as those who took the view that life was influenced by nothing more than the ongoing course of time (cf. Q 45:24). Muslim heresiographers used the term to describe Greek philosophers, and 'Alī probably has this meaning in mind and is pairing them with the Greek Alexander, just as he pairs the dualists with the Persian Ardashīr.

وقد ظنّ قوم من الفسقة بالمسيح عليه السلام مثل ذلك، وقال فيه ربّانيو اليهود: "إنّ هذا إنّما يُخرج الشيطان برئيس الشياطين". فقال لهم المسيح إنّ كلّ مملكة تغير<sup>1</sup> على نفسها فإنّها تهلك ولا تقوم، وكلّ مدينة يقع فيها التشتت والخلاف فإنّها لا تدوم ولا تثبت". قال: "فإنّ كان الشيطان هو الذي يُخرج الشيطان فكيف يدوم ملكه وعزّه؟" فبهت اليهود عند ذلك.

فهذه حجّتنا على من قال في النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>2</sup> ما قالت اليهود في المسيح عليه السلام. فإنّ ممّا أدّى النبيّ عليه السلام عن الله عزّ وجلّ في الشيطان قوله: ﴿ألا إنّ حزب الشيطان هم الخاسرون﴾، وقوله: ﴿إنّ الشيطان لكم عدوّ فاتخذوه عدوّاً إنّما يدعو حزبه ليكونوا من أصحاب السعير﴾، وقوله: ﴿أخرج منها فإنّك رجيم وإنّ عليك لعنتي إلى يوم الدين﴾، وقوله: ﴿لأملأنّ جهنّم منك وممن تبعك منهم أجمعين﴾<sup>3</sup>، وقوله: ﴿يا أيّها الذين آمنوا لا تتبعوا خطوات الشيطان﴾<sup>4</sup>، وقوله: ﴿قل أعوذ بربّ الناس ملك الناس إله الناس<sup>5</sup> من شرّ الوسواس الخناس﴾<sup>6</sup>. ولقد<sup>7</sup> أمر النبيّ عليه السلام بالاستعاذة منه<sup>8</sup> في كلّ صلاة ووقت في قوله: "أعوذ بالسميع العليم من الشيطان الرجيم".

فإنّ كان الشيطان ينصر من يلعنه وينذر الناس شرّه لم نأمن أنّ يكون جميع ما ظهر من الأديان باسم الله الفرد الواحد هو موافق للشيطان ومن عنده. وقد أجمعت<sup>27v</sup> الأمم كلّها على أنّ الشيطان إنّما يأمرك بالشرك بالله وعبادة الأوثان والنيران

<sup>1</sup>This appears to be the reading in both A and B; C and D: تفتن <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>B omits: منهم أجمعين

<sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B: إله الناس ملك الناس <sup>6</sup>B adds: الذي يوسوس في صدور الناس

<sup>7</sup>B omits this word. <sup>8</sup>B omits this word.

Sinful people thought this kind of thing with regard to Christ (peace be upon him). The Jewish rabbis said about him, 'This man drives out Satan by the prince of demons.' But Christ said to them, 'Every kingdom that is against itself will perish and not stand, and every town in which there is discord and hostility will not last or be stable.' He said, 'If it is Satan who drives out Satan then how can his kingdom and might last?' and the Jews were bewildered at this.<sup>179</sup>

This is our argument against those who say about the Prophet (God bless him and give him peace) what the Jews said about Christ (peace be upon him). Among what the Prophet (peace be upon him) testified from God, great and mighty, about Satan are his words: 'Lo! is it not the devil's party who will be the losers?';<sup>180</sup> 'Lo! the devil is an enemy for you, so treat him as an enemy. He only summoneth his faction to be owners of the flaming Fire';<sup>181</sup> 'Go forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast. And lo! My curse is on thee till the Day of Judgment. He said: My Lord! Reprieve me till the day when they are raised';<sup>182</sup> 'I shall fill hell with thee and with such of them as follow thee, together';<sup>183</sup> 'O ye who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the devil';<sup>184</sup> 'Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the sneaking whisperer'.<sup>185</sup> The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered protection to be sought from him in all acts of prayer and at all times, when he said, 'I seek refuge with the All-hearing, All-knowing from the accursed Satan.'

So if Satan helped the one who condemned him and warned people about evil from him, we cannot be sure whether all | the faiths that have appeared in the name of the one, single God are in league with Satan and come from him. All the nations agree that Satan orders you to associate other beings with God and to worship images and fires, incites adultery, depravity and treachery, and

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179 Matthew 12:24–26. In line with his overall approach to biblical texts in this work, 'Ali has no hesitation in citing this passage to support his case.

180 Q 58:19.

181 Q 35:6.

182 Q 38:77–79.

183 Q 38:85.

184 Q 24:21.

185 Q 114:1–4.

ويزينّ الزنا والفجور والغدر وفيه محبّته ووسوسته،<sup>1</sup> وأنّه عدوّ الله وعدوّ لأنبيائه الذين يأمرّون بخلاف ذلك كلّهم. فالله إذا بريء من حزب الشيطان والشيطان بريء من حزب الله وأوليائه، وهذه الغلبة من الله لا من غيره.

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<sup>1</sup>B: وسوسته

he is totally given up to it and to insinuating it. He is the enemy of God and of his prophets, who command the opposite of the whole of this. So then, God has nothing to do with the party of Satan and Satan has nothing to do with the party of God and his saints, and this victory is from God and not from anyone else.

## الباب الثامن

في أنّ الدّاعين إلى دينه والشّاهدين بحقيقة  
أمره كانوا خيار الناس وأبرارهم

وقد ظنّ قوم بحواريّ النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> الزور والزيغ وقالوا فيهم فأثمّوا  
وحادوا عن سبيلهم فضلّوا. وأنا ذاكر من فضائلهم وزهدهم وتورّعهم ما يدعو  
إلى حسن الظنّ بهم ويكفّ عن تنقيصهم.<sup>2</sup>

### في زهد أبي بكر رضوان الله عليه

فأولّهم أبو بكر رضي الله عنه. بلغ من زهده في الدنيا واستهانته بها وتنزّهه عنها  
أنّه دُعي إلى الخلافة وهي أرفع أمور الدنيا قدراً وأعظمها شأنًا وأجمعها لكلّ  
عزّ ورفعة وقهر ولذة عاجلة وآجلة وأجلّها<sup>3</sup> لكلّ أمنيّة. فامتنع منها وتابّها حتى  
أكرهه عليها، فطاف على الناس بعد أيّام وهو يقول بأعلى صوته: "هل من مقيل؟  
هل من مقيل؟". فلمّا لم يجبه أحد خطب الناس وقال: "إنّ بيعتي هذه كانت فلتة  
وإنّما قبلتها أنّي خشيتُ الفتنة".<sup>4</sup> والله ما حرصتُ عليها<sup>4</sup> يوماً ولا ليلة ولا سألتها الله  
سرّاً ولا علانية وما لي فيها راحة ولا لي بها طاقة. فهل سمع السامعون برجل أنبل  
من هذا نبلاً وأبلس ورعاً وأرفع همّة إلى الأمور السماوية؟

28r

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>A, C and D: تنقيصهم; B: تنقيصهم (sic for: تنقيصهم). <sup>3</sup>C and D: وأجلّها (wrongly; a

misreading of A). <sup>4</sup>B omits this word, which is added above the line in A.

**That those who called to his religion and witnessed to the truthfulness of his cause were the best and most godly of people**

Certain people have imputed falsehood and deviation to the disciples<sup>186</sup> of the Prophet (God bless him and give him peace), and said that they slipped and turned away from their path and erred. I will speak about their virtues, asceticism and godliness in such a way that will restore good opinion of them and stop fault-finding with them.

### **The asceticism of Abū Bakr (may God's pleasure be upon him)**

The first of them is Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him). His asceticism in the world, his disdain for it and detachment from it reached such a point that he was called to the caliphate, which is the most exalted position in the world in power, the most important in prestige, the one that most concentrates all might, exaltedness, power and delight in the world and the world to come, and is splendid beyond all desire, but he refused it and scorned it until they compelled him to accept it. After a few days he came to the people and shouted at the top of his voice, 'Can anyone take it away? Can anyone take it away?' But when no one answered him he spoke to the people and said, 'This oath of loyalty to me was unlooked for, and I only accepted it because I feared unrest. | By God, I did not desire it by day or night, I did not ask God for it in secret or in the open, I have no joy in it nor ability for it.' Has anyone heard of a man more noble than this, more despairing of his godliness, and more lofty in ambition for the things of heaven?

28r

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186 In the Qur'ān the term *ḥawāriyyūn* is applied specifically to the disciples of Jesus.

وقد<sup>1</sup> بلغ من عفّته وتوقّيه أنّه قدّر لنفسه في كل شهر من الرزق ستين درهماً من مال المسلمين. ويُقال إنّهُ سأل أن يؤخذ منه ماله ويدخل في بيت مال المسلمين وينفق من رزقه كما ينفق غيره فأبى المسلمون ذلك. فقال لهم: "هذه خلافتكم ردّ عليكم، لا والله لا ألبها إلا على هذا" فأجابوه إلى ذلك.

وبلغنا أنّه رضوان الله عليه رأي بعد أن استخلف بأيّام وهو يرفع قيصه لمن زاد. وقيل له في مرضه: "ندعوك الطيب؟"، فقال: "قد رأي الطيب"، قالوا: "فما قال لك؟"، قال: "قال إنّهُ يفعل ما يشاء"، يعني الله. فلما اشتدّت علته قال: "أين طبيبك هذا ليردها إن كان صادقاً؟ والذي أكرم وجه أبي القاسم ما في الأرض نفس تخرج أحبّ إليّ من نفسي ولا نفس هذا الذباب الطائر. أو تعلمون<sup>2</sup> ممّ ذلك؟"، قالوا: "لا"، قال: "لأنّي خشيت والله أن يجيء أمر يحول بيني وبين الإسلام"، يريد<sup>3</sup> به<sup>4</sup> هفوة أو خطيّة.

وعهد إلى عمر بن الخطّاب رضي الله عنه عند وفاته، فقال: "إنّ حفظت وصيّتي يا عمر فإنّه لا غائب خير لك أن تلقاه من الموت وأنت لاقيه لا محالة. وإنّ ضيّعت عهدي فإنّه<sup>5</sup> لا غائب شرُّ لك من<sup>6</sup> أن تلقاه ولن تعجزه". ولما حضرته الوفاة أوصى إلى عمر رضي الله عنهما، فقال: "إنّي لم أصب من مال المسلمين شيئاً إلا هذا البكر كنت أحمل عليه الماء فأشرب ويشربون منه، وهذه الجارية كانت تخدمني وتخدمكم، وهذه القطيفة"، ونبذها برجله ثمّ قال: "وقد رددت ذلك كلّهُ وأنا حيّ سويّ".

28v

<sup>1</sup>This word is repeated in B. <sup>2</sup>C and D: وتعلمون <sup>3</sup>C and D: ويريد <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>C and

D omit this word. <sup>6</sup>C and D omit this word.



His abstinence and piety reached such a point that every month he assigned to himself sixty dirhams from the Muslims' revenue for subsistence. It is said that he asked for his revenue to be removed from him and placed in the Muslims' treasury, and that he would pay for his subsistence as others did. But the Muslims would not allow this, so he said to them, 'This caliphate of yours is returned to you, for by God I can only do it on this condition.' So they conceded it to him.

We have heard that a few days after he became caliph he (may God's pleasure be on him) was seen taking off his shirt to be auctioned. In his illness he was told, 'Shall we call the doctor to you?' He replied, 'The doctor has seen me', and they said, 'What did he say to you?' He said, 'He said that he (meaning God) would do as he willed.' And when his illness grew worse, he said, 'Where is this doctor of yours to prevent it, if he is trustworthy? By him who bestowed honour upon Abū l-Qāsim,<sup>187</sup> there is no soul on earth that I would desire to depart more than my own, not even the soul of this fly flitting past. Do you know why?' They said, 'No.' He said, 'Because by God I fear that something will come between me and Islam.' By this he meant an error or a fault.

At the time of his death he enjoined 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may God be pleased with him) and said, "Umar, if you keep my advice, you will meet no hidden thing that is better for you than death, and you will certainly meet that. And if you ignore my charge, you will meet no | hidden thing that is worse for you, and you will not be able to avoid it." When his end approached he enjoined 'Umar (may God be pleased with them both) and said, 'I have acquired nothing from the Muslims' revenue except this young camel on which I carried the water which I and they drank, this young girl who has served me and all of you, and this velvet garment,' and he pushed it away with his foot. Then he said, 'I have returned all of it while I am alive and am able to.'

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187 Muḥammad's forename.

وبلغ من خشيته ومن عدله أنه اختصم إليه رجلان فكان أحدهما يدخل في حجة الآخر، فنهاه أبو بكر مراراً فلم ينته، فرفع الدرة وأتقاهما الرجل بيده فأصاب اليد وانكسرت ومضى الرجل كذلك، فاغتم أبو بكر رضي الله عنه غمماً شديداً وقال لعمر: "لا وليت هذا الأمر أبداً وما أوقعني فيه غيرك"، فقال عمر: "والله إن هذا الأمر ألزم لك من أذنك، إي والله يضرب بالخشب وبالسيف". ثم قام ومعه عمر حتى صار إلى الرجل ودفع أبو بكر الدرة إليه وبرك بين يديه وقال له: "استقد فلان، يكن ذلك عاجلاً أحب إلي من أن يكون آجلاً". فأبى الرجل وقال: "لقد كنت على أن اروح إليك وأسألك أن تستغفر لي لأنني أغضبتك". فقال عمر للرجل: "لتفعلن<sup>1</sup> أو لتجعلنه<sup>2</sup> في حل"، قال الرجل: "فأنت في حل يا خليفة رسول الله غفر الله لك". فقام أبو بكر وهو يقول: "غفر الله لك كما غفرت لي وعفى عنك كما عفوت عني".

وخطب رضي الله عنه فقال: "إني وليتكم ولست بخيركم فإن استقمتم فأعينوني وإن ضعفت فتقووني، | الضعيف عندكم هو القويّ عندي حتى آخذ له بالحق، والقويّ عندكم هو الضعيف عندي حتى آخذ منه الحق. الصدق أمانة والكذب خيانة. ما أطعت الله أطيعوني فإذا عصيته فلا طاعة لي عليكم".

فمن كان هذا زهده في الدنيا وقد ملكها، وهذا قوله في الخلافة وقد أكره عليها لم يُظنّ به قبول الباطل والقول به؟

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D: ولتجعلنه

His discretion and justness reached such a point that two men disputed before him, and one of them kept interrupting the other's evidence. Abū Bakr restrained him a number of times, but he would not let up. Then he raised his whip, and when the man went to shield himself from it with his hand he hit the handle and it broke. At this point the man went off, with Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him) in great anxiety. He said to 'Umar, 'I should never have been placed in this position, and you alone got me into it.' So 'Umar replied, 'By God, this position is more a part of you than your ear. Indeed, by God, one has to strike with the stick and sword.' Then he got up, with 'Umar with him, and went to the man. Abū Bakr gave the whip to him and, kneeling down before him, he said to him, 'Sir, have your own back. I would wish it done sooner rather than later.' But the man refused and said, 'I was just about to come to you to ask you to forgive me because I have made you angry.' 'Umar said to the man, 'Do it, or release him.' The man said, 'You are indeed free, Caliph of the Messenger of God, may God forgive you.' Abū Bakr got up, saying, 'May God forgive you as you have forgiven me, and may he pardon you as you have pardoned me.'

In a sermon he said (may God be pleased with him), 'I have governed you, though I am not the best among you. If I have conducted myself properly then help me, and if I have acted weakly then strengthen me. | The one who is weak in your eyes is strong in mine until I have given justice to him, and the one who is strong in your eyes is weak in mine until I have extracted justice from him. Sincerity is faithfulness and deceit is falseness. As long as I obey God, obey me, but if I disobey him, you have no duty to obey me.'

29r

How can it be thought that a man having such asceticism in the world, although he owned it, and expressing such views about the caliphate, although he was forced to it, accepted falsehood or anything said about it?

## في زهد عمر بن الخطاب وفضائله<sup>1</sup> رحمة الله عليه ورضوانه

إنَّه لا شيء من أمر الدنيا أجلّ من الخلافة ولا أقلّ من القوت والبلغة، فمن أئتمَّ الخلافة صفواً عفواً فَعَفَّ عنها ورضي بالقوت منها وقنع<sup>2</sup> بالعري والبؤس واقتصر الحصى وتوسّد الذراع وحسم نفسه عن كلّ شهوة ولذّة وأتى بخزائن كسرى المصونة منذ آلاف سنين فخرها وقدرها ولم يمدّ يده إلى درهم ولا دينار ولا درّة ولا آنية ولا جوهرة ولا حلة ولا حلية ولا وصيف ولا وصيفة منها، فما في الأرض أزهّد منه ولا أعفّ ولا أكفّ.

وكان إذا وجّه جيشاً قال: "يا أيّها الناس إنّ عليّ لكم ما ضمنتُ يوم وليتكم، لا آخذ من مالكم درهماً إلّا بحقه، وإذا صار إليّ لم أخرجهُ إلّا في وجهه، ولا أجزمكم<sup>3</sup> في البعوث ولا أكلفكم فوق طاقتكم، وأكون أبا العيال حتى تنصرفوا". فكان يختلف إلى منازل المغيبات فيسلم عليهنّ ويشتري حوائجهنّ بنفسه وهو أمير المؤمنين ويأتيهنّ بكتب أزواجهنّ وينفذ إليهم كتبهنّ. ويُقال إنّهُ رأى امرأة مغيبة قد حملت جرّة فأخذ عمر رضي الله عنه الجرّة منها،<sup>4</sup> وحملها على رأسه حتى أتى بها منزلها، وإنّه مرّ بشيخ نصرانيّ وهو يسأل ويقول: "اللهمّ احكم بيني وبين المسلمين جبوني شاباً وأسلموني كبيراً"، فقال عمر: "هاك عمر"، ومضى مبادراً حتى ملأ غرارة من دقيق ودعا بحمّال ليحملها ثمّ قال للحمّال: "لا، أنا أولى بحملها"، فحملها على رأسه وأتى بها الشيخ مع دراهم دفعها إليه وأجرى له في كلّ شهر قوته.

وُبُعْثَ إليه بسلة من حلوى فقال: "هل أهدى لجميع المسلمين مثلها؟"، قالوا: "لا"، قال: "فلا حاجة بي إلى مرفق أو مطعم لا يعمّ جميع المسلمين"، وأمر برفعها من بين

<sup>1</sup>B: وفي فضائله <sup>2</sup>B: واقنع <sup>3</sup>B: أجهزكم <sup>4</sup>C and D omit this word.

**The asceticism and virtues of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may God’s  
mercy and pleasure be upon him)**

There is nothing in the world more significant than the caliphate, and less significant than what allows subsistence and survival. A man to whom the caliphate came in an untroubled and untrammelled way and he held back from it, being happy with subsistence from it and content with nakedness and wretchedness, spreading out pebbles for bedding and using his arm as a pillow, depriving himself of every desire and delight, being brought the treasures of Chosroes which had been guarded for thousands of years and disdaining them, regarding them as polluted, not reaching out his hand to a *dirham*, a *dīnār*, a pearl, a vessel, a gem, a garment, an ornament, a manservant or maidservant among them, can there be anyone in the entire world more abstemious, or more virtuous, or more forbearing than him!

When he sent out an army he said, ‘Men, I have a duty towards you that I took on the day I became your ruler, not to take from your revenue a *dirham* except with justification, and if it came to me, only to spend it in the right way; and not to delay your return when sending you out; not to charge you beyond your abilities; and to be the father of the household until you return.’ So he used to visit the homes of the women left behind to greet them and in person to buy their necessities although he was the Commander of the Faithful, and to bring them letters from their husbands and send their letters to them. It is said that he saw a woman left behind carrying a jar, so ‘Umar (may God be pleased with him) took the jar and carried it on his head until he took it to her home. He passed an old Christian who asked and said, ‘In God’s name give judgement between me and the Muslims; they taxed me when I was young, and they have abandoned me when I have become old.’ ‘Umar said, “Umar is here for you!” And he hurried away and filled a sack with flour and ordered someone to carry it. But then he said to the man carrying it, ‘No, I am the one who ought to carry it.’ So he carried it on his head and took it to the old man, together with *dirhams* which he gave to him. And he made provision for him every month.

A basket of sweets was sent to him, and he said, ‘Have all the Muslims been given the same?’, and they said, ‘No.’ He said, ‘Then I have no need of any comfort or foodstuff that is not shared by all the Muslims’, and he ordered it

يديهِ. وقيل له في مرضته: "تأتيك بالطبيب"، قال: "لو كان شفائي في مسح أذني ما مسحتها، نعم المذهوب إليه ربّي".

ونظر إليه أهل الشام وقد نزل عن بعيره وهو يقوده وانتهى إلى نهر فجلس وخلع خفّه بيده وخاض النهر فقالوا: "ما رأينا ملكاً في رهبانية غير هذا". ويقال إنّ علي بن أبي طالب<sup>1</sup> رضي الله عنه كان في حائط له يعمل، فسمع صوتاً عالياً فقال له الحسن بن عليّ عليهما السلام: "يا أبتى اصعد ترى عجباً"، فإذا هو بعمر يعدو وخلف بعير قد ندّ من مال الصدقة<sup>2</sup> وهو يتصبّب عرقاً، فقال<sup>3</sup> علي رضي الله عنه: "هذا الأحوذى بن حنتمة الذي لان في غير ضعف واشتدّ في غير عنف".

ولما أتى بالهرمزان ملك الأهواز وعليه هيئته ولباسه والناس يتعجبون | منه قال لهم: "أين أمير المؤمنين؟"، قالوا: "هو ذاك النائم". قال: "فأين حجبتة؟" قالوا: "ليس له حجة". قال: "فأين شرطه؟" قالوا: "هو شرطيّ نفسه". قال: "فأين مجلس ملكه ووساده؟" قالوا: "مجلسه الأرض والتراب وفرشته الحصى ووساده يده". قال لهم: "إنما قويتم علينا بهذا، هانت عليكم الدنيا والحياة ورغبنا فيهما".

ولما أتى بخزائن كسرى وجواهره صبّ ذلك في المسجد صبّاً فأظهر اغتماً فقليل له: "يا أمير المؤمنين إنّه يوم سرور"، فقال: "إنّه لم يفتح هذا الفتح على أحد إلا صار بأسمهم بينهم". وجلس فكان يقسم المال بالكفّ وإبنة جالس ناحية كأنّه شاة كسير. فلما رآه لا يعطيه شيئاً، قال: "يا أبتى كأنك لا ترى لي في هذا المال حقاً"،

<sup>1</sup>The following words are written above the line in the same hand in A, and are lacking in B: بن

نحن <sup>5</sup>B adds: <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. قال <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D: الصدقات <sup>2</sup>B: أبي طالب

to be removed from his presence. When he was ill he was told, 'Shall we bring you a doctor?' He said, 'If my cure depended on ointment for my ear, I would not have used it. How perfect is my Lord, to whom I am going.'

The people of Syria saw him getting off his camel and leading it, coming to a river, sitting down and taking off his shoe with his own hand and walking through the river. And they said, 'We have not seen any other king acting like a monk, only this.' It is said that 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib (may God be pleased with him) was in a garden he owned working, and he heard a loud noise. Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī said to him (peace be upon them both), 'Father, climb up and you will see something amazing. It is 'Umar chasing a camel that has escaped from the alms-fund, and he is pouring with sweat.' 'Alī (may God be pleased with him) said, 'This is the gifted son of Ḥantama,<sup>188</sup> who is gentle without being weak and strong without being harsh.'

When al-Hurmuzān, King of al-Ahwāz,<sup>189</sup> was brought before him, in his attire and array, and the people were agog | at him, he said to them, 'Where is the Commander of the Faithful?' They said, 'He is that man asleep.' He said, 'Then where are his chamberlains?'; and they said, 'He has no chamberlains.' He said, 'Then where are his guards?' and they said, 'He is his own guard.' He said, 'Then where is the throne of his realm and his cushion?'; and they said, 'His throne is the earth and the dust, his pillow is the stone and his cushion is his hand.' He said to them, 'Then it is through him that you have prevailed over us. You regard the world and life as little, and we have lusted after both.'

When Chosroes' treasures and gems were brought, it was all emptied in the mosque. He appeared to be distressed, so he was told, 'Commander of the Faithful, this is a day of joy.' He said, 'No victory such as this has been granted to any without some harm arriving between them.' Then he sat down and was dividing the wealth with the palm of his hand, and his son was sitting apart, like a sheep with a broken bone.<sup>190</sup> When he saw that he was giving him nothing he said, 'Father, it is as though you do not think I have any rights in this wealth.'

30r

188 'Umar's mother Ḥantama was the daughter of Ḥāshim ibn al-Mughira of the Makhzūm clan of Quraysh.

189 Al-Hurmuzān was the Sassanian governor of the province of al-Ahwāz at the time of the early Islamic conquests. He accepted Muslim rule at first but then revolted, and 'Umar sent Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī against him. This story contrasts the luxury to which Persian rulers were accustomed with the simple, basic ways of the first Muslim Arabs.

190 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 67, n. 2, explains that this proverbial saying means he was quiet and distressed.

قال: "بلى يا بني، ولكني<sup>1</sup> أخاف إن يتسع كفي لك". فقال بعض من حضر: "فإنني أدفع إليه ما حفت لي واحضن لي غيره"، ففعل ذلك.

وتناولت بُنيةً له درهماً من المال فصاح بها فلم تلقه، فقام إليها عمر رضي الله عنه فألقته الصبية في فيها فلم يزل يعصر حلقها حتى رمت به. وأهدى له رجل حلّتين فباعهما واشترى بهنّهما خمسة رؤوس وأعتقهم وقال: "إنّ رجلاً أثر قشرين يلبسهما على عتق هؤلاء لغيبين الرأي".

### زهد علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه

يُقال إنّه لما استخلف علي بن أبي طالب كرم الله وجهه رئي<sup>2</sup> بعد أيام وهو يرفع سيفه<sup>3</sup> لمن زاد وهو يقول: "لو كان لنا عشاء ليلة ما بعناه. وكان من أحوج الناس إليه وأضر بهم به<sup>4</sup> فاضطرته الحاجة إلى بيعه وهو يستغل من ضيعة له في كلّ سنة مالاً عظيماً، وكان يخلي بيت المال في كلّ يوم ويرشه وينام فيه وهو يقول: "يا صفراء غري غيري خلا لك الجوف فيضي واصفري".

ويقال إنّه كانت له قطيفة متجرّدة بالية فألقت عليه وعلى عياله الجارية قطيفة من قطف الصدقة، فأنكر نخلها وقال: "ما هذه؟"، قالت: "قطيفة من مال الصدقة". فألقاها عن نفسه وقال: "لقد أصردتمونا بقية ليلتنا".

وناداه رجل وهو في بيته فخرج إليه مسرعاً وهو يقول: "والبيكاه".

<sup>1</sup>B: لكني <sup>2</sup>B: شُهد <sup>3</sup>B: يرفع سيفه بعد أيام <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit these two words.



He said, 'Indeed, my son, for I fear that my palm might become broad for you.' One of those present said, 'I will pass to him what you have scooped out to me, and scoop out to me some beside this', and he did this.

His little daughter took a *dirham* from the revenue, so he shouted at her, but she did not let go of it. 'Umar (may God be pleased with him) stood before her and the young girl put it in her mouth. But he kept on claspings her throat until she threw it down. A man gave him two sets of clothes as a present, but he sold them and with the price for them he bought five slaves and freed them, saying, 'Any man who would rather cover himself in two coats than free these men has got the wrong idea.'

### The asceticism of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (God's pleasure be upon him)

It is said that when 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may God honour him) was made caliph, a few days later he was seen offering his sword to whoever could give most, and saying, | 'If I only had a night's supper, I would not be selling it.' He had greater need of it than anyone else and he used it more, but necessity forced him to sell it, although every year he received a considerable revenue from an estate he owned. Every day he used to empty the public treasury, sprinkle it with water and sleep in it, saying, 'Yellow stuff, tempt someone else and not me. The earth is open for you, whether you are white or gold.'

30v

It is said that a velvet cloth he had was worn and threadbare, so the maidservant spread over him and his family one of the velvet cloths from the freewill offering. But he did not like its texture and said, 'What is this?' She said, 'A velvet cloth from the freewill offering revenue.' Then he flung it off himself and said, 'You have made us feel cold for the rest of the night.'

A man shouted to him when he was in his house, and he came out to him promptly, saying, 'I am at your service.'

زهد عمر بن عبد العزيز وعبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب وعدّة من خيار  
المسلمين رضي الله عنهم أجمعين

فإن قال قائل إن هؤلاء كانوا معتادين للبؤس، وإنه لم يسغ لهم غير ما فعلوا فقد يكون الرجل معتاداً للبؤس، فإذا صار إلى السعة اتسع وتخرق في اللذات واستدرك منها ما فات في خوالي الأزمنة. فهذا معاوية وابنه يزيد ومن بعده من خلفاء بني أمية قد تمتعوا ونالوا لذاتهم من كلّ مأكول ومشروب وملبوس ومشموم ومحبوب ومعشوق. فما انتطح فيه عنزان ولا امتنع عليهم اثنان، ما خلا الوليد بن يزيد بن عبد الملك، فإنه كشف القناع وخلع العذار وأهمّل الأمر وبُلي بالإنشمار<sup>1</sup> والقدر الجاري.

وهذا عمر بن عبد العزيز رحمة<sup>2</sup> الله عليه وقد تقدّمه عدّة ممّن<sup>3</sup> ذكرنا | من أصحاب  
الملاهي وإخوان الدنيا، فلم يلتفت إلى شيء من ذلك. فلقد بلغ من نسكه واستهائته  
بالدنيا بعد أن كان أنعم أهل دهره بدنأً، وأطيبهم ريحاً، وأحسنهم زينة وأشدّهم  
في كل شيء نيقه،<sup>4</sup> أنه صعد المنبر بعد أن استخلف فقال: "والله ما تمنيتُ هذا  
الأمر قط ولا سألتُ الله فيه في سرّ ولا علانية، فَن كان كارهاً لنا فالآن". وأنّ  
مما حقّق به قوله هذا أنه تهدّمت<sup>5</sup> درجة<sup>6</sup> في داره فرمّا بعض أهله، فقال عمر  
رضي الله عنه: "سبحان الله كأنّ الذي صنع نفس على أن أخرج من الدنيا ولما  
أضع لبنة على لبنة"، ثمّ أمر بهدمها.

تأنقاً في كلّ<sup>4B</sup>: ممّا (wrongly).<sup>3C</sup> and D: نعمة<sup>2B</sup>.<sup>1C</sup> and D: بالآ يتسار, a misreading of A.

درجت<sup>6B</sup>: تهزمت<sup>5B</sup>: شيء

**The asceticism of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and many of the finest Muslims (may God be pleased with them all)**

If someone should say that these men were used to affliction and they could not have done other than they did, well while a man may be used to affliction, if he meets with plenty he can become used to luxuries and extravagant, and he makes up with them for what he missed in past times. So Mu‘āwiya, his son Yazīd, and the Umayyad caliphs after him indulged themselves and derived their pleasures from anything to be eaten, drunk, worn, inhaled, loved and desired. Two goats would not butt each other during it,<sup>191</sup> and there were not two men who would oppose them. The exception was al-Walid ibn Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik,<sup>192</sup> who lifted the veil, threw off restraint, and neglected the command; he was smitten by an eye complaint<sup>193</sup> and the inevitable fate.

This man ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (may God’s mercy be upon him), although many pursuers of amusements and companions of the world whom we have mentioned | had preceded him, he had no regard for any of this. His piety and disdain for the world reached such a point that after being the most graceful, most delicately scented, most handsomely attired, and the most fastidious overall of the people of his time, when he became caliph he climbed into the pulpit and said, ‘In God’s name, I had no desire at all for this position, nor did I beseech God for it in secret or in public, so if there is anyone who is hostile towards me, this is the moment.’ These words of his are given substance by the fact that a step in his house collapsed, and one of his family repaired it. ‘Umar (may God be pleased with him) said, ‘Praise be to God! It is as though whoever did this begrudged the fact that I would leave the world without putting one brick on another.’ Then he ordered it to be dismantled.<sup>194</sup>

31r

191 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 70, n. 1, explains that this means no-one showed them any opposition.

192 Al-Walid, r. 743–744, was notorious for his excesses. ‘Ali intimates that these were so great that the general acquiescence to Umayyad rule came to an end, and he was brought to his death by divine intervention.

193 According to ‘Ali’s own *Firdaws al-ḥikma* (ed. Siddiqui, p. 177), *intishār al-ashfār* (Meyerhof, ‘Ali aṭ-Ṭabarī’s “Paradise of wisdom”, p. 23, corrects this to *intithār*) is an eye complaint that results in the loss of the lashes.

194 ‘Umar was protesting that he was not above making repairs for himself even though he was caliph.

وأنه أتى في يوم بارد بماء مسخن فقال للجارية: "من أين لكم هذا؟"، فقالت: "سخناه حيث يطبخ طعام المسلمين"، فقال: "لولا أنك أتيتها بجهالة لم تخدميني بعدها. أرددي عليهم ثمن الحطب". واشترى له غلامه ثوباً بعشرة دراهم فقال: "هذا لين جداً أريد أدون من هذا"، فقال الغلام: "لقد اشتريت له قبل الخلافة ثوب وشي بسبعمئة دينار فقال أريد أرفع من هذا". وأنه قيل له يوماً إن بني أمية قد اشتد عليهم ردك المظالم، فقال: "بودي أن الله قد رد لي كل مظلمة على أنني كلها رددت مظلمة قطع من جسدي أتملة فيكون آخر مظلمة أردّها مع خروج نفسي". وكان يقول: "ما كذبت منذ عقلت، إن الكذب يشين أهله".

31V وكتب إليه عامل حمص يسأله أن يزيد في ثمن قراطيسه | ودهن<sup>2</sup> مصباحه ويستأذنه في مرمة سور المدينة، فكتب إليه: "أرقّ القلم وأوجز الكلام واجمع حاجتين في حاجة، وأما دهن المصباح فإن عهدي بك وأنت تخرج في الليلة الظلماء إلى المسجد لا مصباح معك، وأما سور المدينة فخصّ مدينتك بالعدل ونقّ<sup>4</sup> طرقها من الجور".

وكتب إليه والي العراق بأن قد اجتمعت عنده أموال عظيمة، فأمره أن يوسع بها على المسلمين وذرائعهم في أرزاقهم، فكتب إليه أنه قد فعل وحصلت أموال. فأمره أن يزوّج أبكار الرجال من أبكار النساء، فكتب إليه أنه قد فعل وحصل مال. فكتب إليه أن يقوي أهل الذمة على العمارة ويجعله سلفاً عليهم، فلا حاجة لعمر وآل عمر في شيء من ذلك.

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B: دهن <sup>3</sup>B adds: أن <sup>4</sup>B omits this word (leaving a blank space, presumably because of difficulty in reading it).

One cold day he was brought some heated water, and he said to the servant girl, 'Where did you get this?' She said, 'We heated it where the Muslims' food is cooked.' He said, 'Unless you had brought it through ignorance you would not be serving me after this. Give them back the price of the wood.' His servant bought him a garment for ten *dirhams*, and he said, 'This is very soft; I would prefer one less than this.' The servant said, 'Before the caliphate, I would buy him an embroidered garment for seven hundred *dirhams* and he would say, "I would prefer one more expensive than this."' One day he was told, 'Your removal of wrongdoings is annoying the Umayyad family.' He said, 'I only wish that God would remove every wrongdoing from me. For whenever I remove an abuse he cuts off a finger-sized piece from my body, so I shall remove the last wrongdoing when my soul departs.' He used to say, 'I have not lied since I have had my senses. A lie dishonours the people who are partner to it.'

The governor of Ḥimṣ wrote to him requesting him to increase the allocation for his sheets of paper | and the oil for his lamp, and to ask his permission to repair the wall of the town. He wrote to him, 'Make the pen finer and the speech more concise, and combine the two needs into one; concerning the lamp oil, my instruction to you is not to have a lamp when you go out to the mosque in the dark night; and concerning the town wall, fortify your town with justice and cleanse its streets from oppression.'

31v

The prefect of Iraq wrote to him that a huge fortune had been gathered to him. So he ordered him to increase the incomes of the Muslims and their children with it. He wrote to him that he had done this and the fortune remained, so he ordered him to marry young men to young women. He wrote to him that he had done this and some fortune remained, so he wrote to him to encourage the protected people to build and to make it a free loan to them, because neither 'Umar nor his family had any need of it.

وبلغنا أن عبد الله بن عمر ابن الخطاب —رحمة الله عليهما— اشتى في مرضه عباً فوجدوا عنقوداً واشتروه له بدرهم، وجاء سائل فأمر بدفعه إليه فذهبوا فاشتروه من السائل وردّوه إليه. فجاء سائل آخر فدفعه إليه وأبى أن يذوق منه.

وبلغنا أن الربيع بن خيثم —رحمة الله عليه— لما مرض قالوا: "لو دعوت بطبيب"، قال: "قد أردت ذلك ثم قصرت، فقلت أين عاد وثمود وقرون، بين ذلك كثير، كان فيهم أطباء فلم يبق المداوون ولا الذي داووه،<sup>2</sup> فما معنى الطبيب والموت لا مدفع له؟".

32r وولي البصرة رجل من أهل الشام وكان يستدرج القراء ويتأتى لهم حتى يقبلوا أرزاقه وصلاته، فعرض ذلك على امرأة ناسكة فقالت: "يا فاضح القراء، والله إنني لأستحي أن أسأل مالك الدنيا شيئاً من أمر الدنيا، فكيف أسأل ذلك مملوكاً مثلي فقيراً؟".

وبلغ بعض ولاية الكوفة من الهاشميين عن رجل مستور زهد وورع، فبعث إليه بمال عظيم، وامتنع الرجل من قبوله. وظنّ الهاشمي أنه ممن يبغض دولتهم ولا يستحلّ مالهم فهم به. وبلغ ذلك الرجل فقام وصلى ركعات وقال: "يا رب إنهم رغبوني فيما زهدتني فيه وأرادوني على ما نهيتني عنه، فاقبضني إليك"، فوجدوه ميتاً في محرابه.

وحجّ بعض الخلفاء فأتى زاهداً من زهاد مكة فما رفع إليه رأسه وأحضره مالا عظيماً ليفرقه فيمن يرى. فأبى أن يقبله وسأله أن يوصيه فقال: "أتى الله فيما استرعاك من أمور المسلمين واكتف بالقرآن هادياً<sup>3</sup> ومؤدباً".

<sup>1</sup>B: نعمة <sup>2</sup>C and D: داووا <sup>3</sup>C: هادئاً (wrongly).

We have heard that ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may God’s mercy be upon both of them) was longing for grapes in his illness, so they found a bunch and bought it for him for a *dirham*. Someone came asking and he ordered it to be given to him, so they went and bought it from the man who had asked and gave it back to him. Then someone else came asking, so he gave it to him and refused to taste of it.

We have heard that when al-Rabīʿ ibn Khaytham<sup>195</sup> (God’s mercy be upon him) was ill, they said, ‘If only you would call a doctor.’ He said, ‘I was intending to do this, but then I drew back and said, “Where are ‘Ād, Thamūd and Qarūn?<sup>196</sup> There is much about them and there were doctors among them, though neither those who were treated nor those they were treating survive. So what is the significance of a doctor when nothing can prevent death?”’

The prefect of Baṣra was a man from Syria, | who used to entice and lure the Qurʾān readers to accept incomes and presents from him. He divulged this to a devout woman, who said, ‘You who make the readers dishonourable! By God, I myself am embarrassed to ask the One who possesses the earth for anything to do with earthly matters, so how can I ask it from a slave who is poor like me?’

32r

One of the Hāshimite prefects of Kūfa heard of a man who was chaste, ascetic and pious, so he sent him much money. But the man refused to accept it, and the Hāshimite thought that he was one of those who hated their coming to power and did not think that money from them was lawful, and he felt disquieted about him. The man heard this, so he got up and prayed a number of *rakʿas*, saying, ‘O Lord, they are making me desirous of what you make me abstemious from, and they want for me what you deny me. So take me to yourself.’ And they found him lifeless in his prayer room.

One of the caliphs went on pilgrimage and met a certain ascetic of Mecca, but he did not raise his head to him, so he offered him a great sum of money to distribute among whoever he wanted, but he refused to accept it. He asked him to give him advice, so he said, ‘Fear God in the affairs of the Muslims he has committed to you, and adhere to the Qurʾān as guide and teacher.’

195 This is probably al-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym, an early Kufan ascetic (d. c. 682/3), who was known for his fortitude during illness.

196 ‘Ād and their successors Thamūd are mentioned a number of times in the Qurʾān (e.g. 7:73–78, 14:9) as tribes descended from Noah who had established distinctive cultures. Qarūn is mentioned as one of Moses’ followers (often identified as the biblical Korah), with great wealth and his own followers (cf. Numbers 16:1–35); he disobeyed Moses and was swallowed up in punishment (Q 28:76–82). The three would represent peoples from the past, who despite their wealth and civilization had now vanished.

فهذا زهد عدّة من الملوك وأبناء الملوك وخيار الأئمة الذين لا يوجد لهم شبيه ولا شروى في ملوك الأرض وأمم الأنبياء مذ كانت الدنيا. فمن كانوا<sup>1</sup> كذلك لم يُظنّ بهم الأباطيل والكذب. ولقد اعتنقتهم الدنيا فهربوا منها، وأقبلت عليهم بحاسن وجهها فأدبروا عنها وألقت إليهم أفلاذ كبدها ودفائن كنوزها ونصبت لهم غرائب نخاخها وبدائع خدعها وفتنها فما دنوا منها، وقنعوا بالأطمار والأسمال<sup>32v</sup> وبالمطعم الجشب العلى، وقد كانوا قبل الإسلام أصحاب عزّ ونخوة وسعة وماشية ونعم وأرباح وتجارات. أقول ذلك بالحقّ الذي لا أحبّ شيئاً إلّا فيه، ولا أنصر قولاً إلّا له، ولا أوّمل فوزاً إلّا به. فإنّ كان من صبر هذا الصبر وغلب الدنيا هذه الغلبة يُظنّ به الكذب والمخرقة فلم<sup>2</sup> يسلم من هذه الظنة والتهمة غيره.

لأنّ تلامذة موسى والمسيح عليهما السلام وإنّ كانوا أبراراً أطهاراً، فإنّ الحقّ لا يستحى منه ويستحقّ تقديمه. ومتى اتّهم أمثال من سمينا فبالحرّيّ أنّ تهم من لم يبلغ درجة زهدهم ولا أُبليّ بمثل محنتهم وخلصهم، لأنّه إنّ كان من ترك مصيدة أو فارق<sup>3</sup> مصلحة<sup>4</sup> أو خرج عن مهنة<sup>5</sup> أو مزرعة<sup>6</sup> من حواربي موسى والمسيح عليهما السلام يجب قبول قوله وتصديق خبره، فبالحرّيّ أنّ يصدّق من ملك الخلافة بأسرها، فكانت أدقّ في عينه من تفلة في نهر بل بعة في بحر.

فإنّ قال قائل إنّ أصحابكم إنّما صبروا على ما ذكرت طلباً للعزّ والرياسة، عارضناهم بمثله وقلنا: "فكذلك يُظنّ بأصحابكم إنّهم لما انتقلوا من حال السوقة والقلّة إلى أنّ أطاعهم المطيعون، وتبرّك بهم المتبرّكون، واجتمع إليهم أهل الأموال والأقدار، ونفذت أوامرهم في أهل المال، تآقت أنفسهم إلى الرياسة فصبروا في حسنها<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D: كان <sup>2</sup>B: فلا <sup>3</sup>C and D: وفارق <sup>4</sup>A and B: مسلحة <sup>5</sup>B: مهنته <sup>6</sup>B:

حبّها <sup>7</sup>C and D: مزرعتها



Such was the asceticism of many kings, kings' sons and the most eminent in the community, of whom there has been no like or equal among the kings of the earth or communities of the prophets since the world has been. Those who were such people cannot be accused of deceptions or lying. The world enfolded them but they fled from it, it came to them with its charms visible but they turned away from it, it shed upon them its innermost rarities and the riches of its treasures, it prepared for them the enticements of its snares and marvels of its deceptions and temptations, but they did not stoop to them and were content | with rags and tatters and with coarse, unrefined food. Before Islam they had been men of consequence, dignity, wealth, cattle, grazing herds, profitable business and trade. This I say in truth, beyond which I desire nothing, for which alone I make my words prevail, and through which alone I hope for success. For if lying and trickery can be imputed to people who persevered in this way and triumphed over the world in this way, no one else will be blameless of such imputation and suspicion.

32v

Indeed, although the disciples of Moses and Christ (peace be upon them) were godly and pure, truth cannot be a cause for shame and must be affirmed. So if such men as we have named are under suspicion, then by the same token we should suspect those who never reached their stage of asceticism, or were put to the test like they were, or were given deliverance like them. For if the word of the disciples of Moses and Christ (peace be upon them), who abandoned fishing, renounced administration and left business and farm, must be accepted and their report believed, then by the same token men who possessed the caliphate completely must be believed, though in their sight it was less significant than spit in the river or dung in the sea.

If someone should say, 'These people of yours only endured what you have mentioned in pursuit of power and leadership', we come back to them with the same thing and say, 'This also is what can be thought of your people, because when they moved from a vulgar and insignificant state to where people sought to obey them and be blessed by them, and men of affluence and esteem gathered to them, and their commands were carried out on people and wealth, their souls desired influence and so they suffered loathing and rudeness in the

33r على الجفاء والخشونة. فقد بلغكم ما فعل شمعون الصفا برجل باع ضيعته وأتاه بئمنها متقرباً به إليه فكان جزاؤه عنده أن غضب عليه وسأل الله أن يميته وأهله من ساعته لأنه البائس ولم يكن أتاه بالثمن كله بل ذخر لنفسه وأهله بعضه. فإنَّ الحرص ممّا لا يُظنّ بحواريي المسيح، فكذلك ظنّوا بحواريي محمد عليه السلام.

فإن قالوا: "إن أصحابكم هؤلاء وإن كانوا خياراً في أنفسهم أبراراً، فإنّه لما كانت شهادتهم لابن عمّهم وفي استمالة الناس إلى دينهم<sup>2</sup> شككنا فيهم"، قلنا: "وكذلك أصحابكم أيضاً، فما شهد لموسى وعيسى إلا بنو عمّهما"<sup>3</sup>. فإن قالوا: "وما حاجتنا إلى شهادات أمنا لنا مع إيمان صاحبكم بأنبيائنا؟"، قلنا: "فما تقولون فيمن قبل قولهم قبل ظهور النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم،<sup>4</sup> أهو مصيب أم مخطئ؟ رشيد أو غويّ؟" عليّ أنّ بين نعت المسيح الذي يؤمن به أهل الإسلام وبين مسيحكم بونا بعيداً جداً، فإنّ النصراني يقولون إنّهم قديم وهو عندنا حديث، ويذكرون أنّه خالق وهو عندنا مخلوق، وأنّه قتل وهو عندنا حيّ. فهذه نعوت متضادة غير متشابهة.

وأيضاً فإنّ الواجب لله على الناس كافة طلب الحقّ واتباعه في كلّ دهر، والواجب للناس على الله جلّ ذكره تأييد الحقّ وإظهاره وقطع حجج الشاكّين فيه. ولسنا نشكّ في أنّ كثيراً من الأمم المحيطين بأرض مصر والشامات قد كان يبلغهم خبر موسى عليه السلام وسائر الأنبياء، وثنّوا أنفسهم إليه وإلى أخبار المسيح قبل ظهور محمد صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup> وعليهم جميعاً،<sup>6</sup> ويسألون عنه من طراً عليهم. فهل كان يجب عليهم قبول ما يبلغهم عنهما والتصديق به أو لا؟ فإن لم توجبوا قبوله كفرتم بكلّ نبيّ، وإن أوجبتم ذلك قلنا: "ولموجب، فإنما كان الذين

<sup>1</sup>B: فلم; C and D: لم <sup>2</sup>C and D: دينه (wrongly). <sup>3</sup>B: أعمامهما <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>Reading

with B; A, C and D omit this word.

course of it.' You have heard what Simon the Rock did to a man who sold his estate and brought him the price of it in order to gain favour with him by means of it. The response he got from him | is that he was enraged with him and asked God to kill him and his family instantly, because he was miserable and had not brought him the whole price but had kept back some of it for himself and his family.<sup>197</sup> Greed is something not to be credited to the disciples of Christ, so credit the disciples of Muḥammad (peace be upon him) in the same way. 33r

If they say, 'Those people of yours, although they are outstanding and devout in themselves, we have doubts about them because their witness was to their cousin, and to draw people to their religion'; we say, 'It is the same with your people as well. No one witnessed to Moses and Jesus except their cousins.' And if they say, 'But what need have we of witnesses in our favour from our own people when your man believed in our prophets?'; we say, 'What then will you say about someone who accepted their words before the appearance of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), was he right or wrong, guided or misled?—though between the description of the Messiah whom the people of Islam believe in and your Christ there is a very considerable difference, for Christians say that he is eternal, while in our view he is temporal; they consider that he is Creator, while in our view he is created; that he was killed, while in our view he is living. These are conflicting descriptions with no similarity.

'Furthermore, all people have a duty towards God to seek the truth and follow it in all ages, and God, great is the mention of him, has a duty towards people to confirm the truth and make it manifest, and to put an end to the pretexts of those who doubt about it. We have no doubt that many of the nations surrounding the land of Egypt and Syria had heard the report of Moses (peace be upon him) and the other prophets, and their souls yearned for it, and also the reports of Christ before the appearance of Muḥammad (may God bless him and give all of them peace), and they asked anyone who came along about it. Should they have | accepted and believed what they heard about the two of them or not? If you do not think that accepting it was necessary, you disbelieve in every prophet. And if you think it necessary, we will say, "Why is it 33v

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197 Acts 5:1–12.

يخبرون بذلك ويشهدون به يهوداً أو نصارى، ومن قبل قول أمثالهم واغترّب به فهو مخالف للحقّ في قولكم، راكن إلى الأباطيل والزور، لأنّه صدّق فيهما قول أمّتهما وبني عمّهما الذين لم توجد عندهم آية ولا دلالة؟<sup>1</sup> فإنّ كان قبول ذلك واجباً على تلك الأمم قبل أن يشهد لهم به محمد صلّى الله عليه وسلّم،<sup>2</sup> فقبول خبر أصحاب النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> أيضاً واجب لا سيّما وقد شهدت الأنبياء له، ووصفوا مخرجه وزمانه، وذكروا من تصحيح ذلك ما ليس لأحد أن يدّعيه سوى المسلمين، لأنّه إذا ادّعت اليهود تلك النبوءات التي أنا ذا كرها مكابرة وجهلاً، فما عسى يقول النصارى وهم يشهدون بأنّ الله قطع دابر اليهود ومحا دينهم عن جريد الأرض، وأخبر أنّه غير موجب لهم رحمة<sup>4</sup> ولا مقيل<sup>5</sup> لهم عثرة ولا قابل منهم صرفاً ولا عدلاً إلا بالرجوع<sup>6</sup> عنها ومفارقة أسبابها؟

للرجوع: <sup>5</sup>B: يقيّل <sup>4</sup>B: نعمة <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>1</sup>B:

necessary when those who reported it and witnessed to it were no more than Jews or Christians, and anyone who accepts the word of such people and is deceived by it is opposed to the truth, according to what you say, and dependent upon untruths and falsehood because he has trusted the word of their two communities and the cousins of them both about them, people who possess no sign or proof?" So, if accepting this was obligatory for those nations before the Prophet Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) witnessed to them about it, then accepting the report of the Prophet's Companions (may God bless him and give him peace) is likewise obligatory, especially since the prophets witnessed to him, described his advent and his time, and gave such a precise account of this that no one apart from the Muslims could claim it. For if the Jews stubbornly but ignorantly claim the prophecies which I am about to relate, what will the Christians say, with their testimony that God has rooted out the Jews, erased their faith from the record of the earth, declared that there is no reason for mercy to them, no cancelling of lapses for them, no acceptance of repentance or honesty from them unless there is withdrawal from it and abandoning for the justifications for it?'<sup>198</sup>

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198 'Alī neatly turns a retort from the real or imaginary opponents he cites in the previous paragraph into a strong argument in his own favour. The opponents quip that since Muḥammad attests to the veracity of Moses and Jesus no more support for them is needed, to which 'Alī replies that a prophet's claims must be accepted on grounds of attestation from their own followers, who will have witnessed what they did and said. But if Christians accept the testimonies of Jesus' disciples, by the same token they cannot reject the testimonies of Muḥammad's Companions.

## الباب التاسع

في أنّه لو لم يظهر النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> لبطلت نبوّات الأنبياء في اسماعيل عليه السلام وفي النبيّ عليه السلام خاتم الأنبياء بالضرورة، لأنّ الله عزّ وجلّ لا يخلف وعده، ولا يكذب خبره، ولا يخيب راجيه.

وقد كان بشرّ إبراهيم عليه السلام وهاجر—رحمة الله عليهما—ببشارات بينات 34r سارّات لم نرها تمّت وظهرت إلّا بظهور النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم.<sup>2</sup> وقد بُشّرت هاجر من ذلك بما لم نر امرأة من نساء الماضين بُشّرت بأكثر منه بعد مريم الطاهرة والبتول أمّ المسيح عليه السلام، على أنّ مريم عليها السلام بُشّرت بالمسيح مرّة واحدة، وبُشّرت هاجر باسماعيل مرّتين، وبُشّر أبوه عليه السلام مراراً. ثمّ ذكر الله عزّ وجلّ هاجر بعد وفاتها كالمخاطب لها على السنة الأنبياء مراراً، وأنا موضح ذلك في أبوابه إن شاء الله.

فأمّا ما أوحى الله تعالى إلى إبراهيم عليه السلام في اسماعيل وحده فهو قوله<sup>3</sup> على لسان موسى عليه السلام في السفر الأوّل<sup>4</sup> من التوراة في الفصل العاشر منه إنّ الله قال لإبراهيم عليه السلام: "قد أُجبتُ دعاءك في اسماعيل وباركتُ عليه وكثّرتُه وعظّمته جداً وسيلدُ اثني عشر<sup>5</sup> عظيماً وأجعله لأمة عظيمة"، فهذا في ترجمة مارقس الترجمان. فأمّا في التوراة التي فسّرها الإثنان وسبعون حبراً من أحبار اليهود فإنّه يقول إنّهُ سَيَلِدُ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أُمَّةً من الأمم، فليس يكون من المواعيد والبشارات في أحد أكثر من قول الله عزّ وجلّ: "إني قد باركتُ فيه وكثّرتُه

إنبأ: 5B. 4B omits this word. 3B omits this word. صلعم: 2B. صلعم: 1B.

**That if the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) had not appeared, the prophecies of the prophets about Ishmael (peace be upon him) and about the Prophet (peace be upon him), the Seal of the Prophets, would necessarily have been pointless, because God, great and mighty, does not go back on his promise, make what he has said a lie, or disappoint the one who puts his hope in him**

He made clear and open announcements to Abraham (peace be upon him) and Hagar (God's mercy be upon her), and we have seen them come to fulfilment or made apparent only with the appearance of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace). Hagar was given the kind of announcement about this greater than we have ever seen any wife of past men receive apart from Mary the pure virgin, mother of Christ (peace be upon him). However, Mary, (peace be upon her) was given the announcement about Christ once, while Hagar was given the announcement about Ishmael twice, and his father (peace be upon him) was given the announcement a number of times. Then, after her passing, God, great and mighty, mentioned Hagar many times on the tongues of the prophets, as though addressing her. I will explain this, as God wills, in its due place.

34r

What God almighty revealed to Abraham (peace be upon him) about Ishmael alone are his words on the tongue of Moses (peace be upon him)<sup>199</sup> in the first Book of the Torah in Chapter 10, for God said to Abraham (peace be upon him), 'I have answered your prayer about Ishmael and have blessed him and increased him and made him exceedingly great. He will beget twelve mighty beings, and I will make him a mighty nation.'<sup>200</sup> This is in the translation of Marcus the translator, though in the Torah interpreted by the seventy-two Jewish priests it says, 'He will beget twelve nations.'<sup>201</sup> For there is nothing greater among the promises and announcements about anyone than the word of God,

199 'Alī shows no difficulty in accepting that the Torah as he read it was the text revealed by God to Moses. He also assumes, without needing to make the connection explicitly, that the references to Hagar and Ishmael that follow are prophecies about Muḥammad and Islam.

200 Genesis 17:20.

201 From the abruptness of 'Alī's mention of him, Marcus must have been familiar to him, and presumably to some at least of his readers. 'Alī shows that he himself is aware of differences between the text derived from the original Hebrew and the Septuagint, evidently the result of close examination in order to ascertain the precise words as they pertained to Islam.

34v

وعظّمته جدًّا جدًّا. وأقلّ من هذا عن الله عزّ وجلّ كبير وأصغره جليل، لأنّ  
 القدر الذي يراه الله كبيراً عظيماً جدًّا جدًّا، فلا قدر أعظم منه. فهذا تبكيت |  
 وتكذيب لذلك الجلف الجافي الذي وقع في اسماعيل وعابه بقول الله فيه: "إنّه يكون  
 غير الناس"، وأنا مفسّر ذلك في هذا الباب تويحاً لذلك المائق المشعوف. وقد<sup>1</sup> كان  
 موسى عليه السلام تنبأ بمثل هذه النبوة في السفر الأوّل والفصل التاسع وقال:  
 "إنّه لما هربت هاجر من سارة تراءى لها ملك الله وقال: "يا هاجر أمة سارة من  
 أين أقبلت وأين تريدان؟" قالت هاجر مجيبة له: "أهربُ من سيّدتي سارة". قال  
 لها ملك الربّ: "ارجعي إلى سيّدتك واخضعي لها فإنّي سأكثر ذريّتك وزرعك  
 حتى لا يحصون كثرة، وهأنت تحبلين وتلدن ابناً وتسمّينه<sup>2</sup> اسماعيل لأنّ الله قد  
 سمع تبتلك وخشوعك،<sup>3</sup> وهو يكون غير الناس وتكون يده فوق الجميع ويد الجميع  
 مبسوطة إليه، ويكون مسكنه على تخوم جميع إخوته".

فهذه بشارة ثانية شافه الملك بها<sup>4</sup> هاجر عليها السلام عن الله عزّ وجلّ مشافهة،  
 وأخبر أنّ الله جاعل يد ابنها العليا وأيدي جميع الناس عنده السفلى، ولم نر ذلك  
 من<sup>5</sup> نبوة موسى عليه السلام<sup>6</sup> تمت وظهرت إلّا بعد ظهور محمد النبيّ صلى الله عليه  
 وسلم.<sup>7</sup>

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وقال موسى في السفر الأوّل والفصل الثالث عشر: "إنّ الله قال لإبراهيم عليه  
 السلام إنّي جاعل ابن أمتك أيضاً لأمة عظيمة لأنّه من زرعك". فهذه بشارة  
 ثالثة في اسماعيل عليه السلام. وقال موسى بعقب هذا القول: "إنّه لما أصبح إبراهيم  
 أخرج هاجر وولده عن منزله طلباً للمسرة سارة، وانتهى إلى ما أمره الله به فيها،

عليه: 6B omits 5B: في شافه بها الملك 4B: تبتلك وسمع خشوعك 3B: تسمّيه C and D: 2 قد 1B:

صلعم 7B: السلام



great and mighty, 'I have blessed him and increased him and made him exceedingly mighty.' Less than this from God, great and mighty, is great, and something smaller than it is significant, because the scope of what God sees is exceedingly great and mighty, and there is no more mighty scope than it. This is a reproach | and refutation of that rude and uncouth person who slandered Ishmael and dishonoured him with the words of God about him, 'He will be a wild ass of the people'. I will explain this under this point as a rebuke to this insane sniveller.<sup>202</sup> For Moses (peace be upon him) prophesied about such a prophecy in the first Book, Chapter 9, saying, 'When Hagar fled from Sarah, the angel of God appeared to her and said, "Hagar, Sarah's slave-girl, where have you come from and where are you going?" Answering him, Hagar said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarah." The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress and be submissive to her, for I will multiply your offspring and your seed until they cannot be counted in number. And you will bear a child and give birth to a son and will name him Ishmael, because God has heard your self-denial and humility. He will be a wild ass of the people, and his hand will be over all and the hand of all will be stretched out to him, and his dwelling will be on the boundaries of all his brothers."<sup>203</sup>

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This is a second announcement which the angel delivered directly to Hagar (peace be upon her) from God, great and mighty, giving the news that God would make the hand of her son uppermost and the hands of all the people lower with respect to him. And among the prophecies of Moses (peace be upon him) we have not seen this come to fulfilment or made manifest except after the appearance of the Prophet Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace).

Moses said in the First Book, Chapter 13, that God said to Abraham (peace be upon him), 'I will also make the son of your slave-girl into a great nation because he is from your seed.'<sup>204</sup> This is a third announcement about Ishmael (peace be upon him). Following these words, Moses said, 'When Abraham rose in the morning, he took Hagar and his son from his dwelling, seeking | to please Sarah, and came to the place that God had commanded him about her. He gave her

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202 'Alī does not identify this opponent, though he is presumably the Christian identified a few paragraphs below as a 'careless accuser', and a little later as a 'Jarmaqānī'.

203 Genesis 16:7–12.

204 Genesis 21:13.

وأنّه دفع إليها زاداً ومزاداً وحمل الصبيّ على كتفها ووجهها لطيفاً. فشخصت هاجر وضلت في البرية التي يُقال لها بئر سبع، ونفذ ماؤها، فوضعت الصبيّ تحت أصل الشيح<sup>1</sup> وانتبذت بقدر مرمى حجر لئلا ترى موت ابنها وأنها كذلك باكية حزينة. وسمع الله صوت الصبيّ ونادى ملك الله هاجر من السماء وقال: "ما بالك يا هاجر؟ ليفرح روعك فقد سمع الله صوت الصبيّ، قومي احمله وتمسكي به فإنّ الله جاعله لأمة عظيمة"، وإنّ الله فتح عينها فإذا هي ببئر ماء ودبت فملأت المزارعة منه وسقت الصبيّ منه.<sup>2</sup> وكان الله معها ومع الصبيّ حتى تربّى، وكان مسكنه في بركة فاران، وأقبل على الرمي يتعلّمه.

فهذا من نبوة موسى النبيّ عليه السلام في اسماعيل وفي أمّه هاجر شبیه بقول جبريل الملك لمريم البتول: "إنّ ربنا معك يا أيّها المباركة في النساء". ففتن النصارى بذلك وقالوا: "إنّ الله كان حالاً فيها لقول جبريل لها إنّ ربنا معك"، وقال موسى عليه السلام في هاجر مثل ذلك، وهو أنّ الله كان معها ومع الصبيّ حتى تربّى.

فهذه أربع بشارات خالصة في اسماعيل عليه السلام، نزل اثنتان منها على إبراهيم واثنتان على هاجر. فليوجدنا<sup>3</sup> ذلك الغمر<sup>4</sup> الغافل بشارات من الله تعالى تتابعت<sup>5</sup> في مولود على والديه منذ كانت الدنيا بأكثر وأشهر وأصحّ من هذه.

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فأمّا ما بشر الله به إبراهيم في جميع ذريته وولده فإنه أيضاً بشارتان إحداهما قول الله عزّ وجلّ لإبراهيم حين قرب ابنه للذبيحة: "من أجل أنّك فعلت هذا الفعل ولم تشفق على ولدك وفردك، فهذا أنا أقسم بنفسي لأباركنّ عليك ولأكثرنّ ذريتك

<sup>1</sup>C and D: شيح <sup>2</sup>B omits the following words: وسقت الصبيّ منه <sup>3</sup>B: فليوجدونا <sup>4</sup>C and D:

<sup>5</sup>A space is left blank by the scribe for this word in B, presumably because of difficulty in reading it.

supplies and provisions, put the child on her shoulder, and sent her off on her way. Hagar departed and went astray in the desert which is called Beersheba. Her water ran out, so she placed the child beneath the root of a wormwood tree and withdrew a stone's throw away so as not to see her son's death, and she remained like this weeping and sad. But God heard the cry of the child, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said, "What is troubling you, Hagar? Let your heart be glad, because God has heard the child's cry. So rise, take him up and hold him, because God will make him into a mighty nation." Indeed, God opened her eyes, and behold she was near a spring, and she crept and filled the container from it, and gave the child some of it. God was with her and with the child until he grew. His dwelling was in the desert of Paran, and he applied himself to learn archery.<sup>205</sup>

This prophecy of Moses (peace be upon him) about Ishmael and his mother Hagar is like the words of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, 'Our Lord is with you, you who are blessed among women.'<sup>206</sup> But the Christians have been tempted by this and say that God came to dwell in her because of Gabriel's words to her, 'Your Lord is with you', though Moses' (peace be upon him) words about Hagar are similar to these, that God was with her and with the child until he grew.

These are four announcements which are clearly about Ishmael (peace be upon him), two of them revealed to Abraham and two to Hagar. Let that careless accuser find for us any announcements from God almighty following one another about a child to its parents which are greater in number, | clearer and more accurate than these since the world has been.

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Concerning what God announced to Abraham about his seed and descendants as a whole, they are also two. One is the words of God, great and mighty, to Abraham when he was bringing his son to the sacrifice: 'Because you have done this deed and have not spared your son, your only one, now I will swear by my own self that I will bless you and will multiply your seed and make them

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205 Genesis 21:14–21.

206 Luke 1:28

ولأجعلنهم في عدد نجوم السماء ورمل سواحل البحار، ويرث ولدك بلدان أعدائهم ويتبرك بهم جميع أمم الأرض". وتقول التوراة أيضاً إن إبراهيم قال: "يا رب،<sup>1</sup> ها أنا ميت وما لي ولد وعقب<sup>2</sup> وإنما يرثني<sup>3</sup> عبدي وتلاد بيتي". فقال له الرب: "كلاً، لن يرثك هذا بل يرثك ابنك<sup>4</sup> الذي يخرج من صلبك فاخرج وانظر إلى نجوم السماء فإن كنت محصياً لها فإنك ستحصي ولدك أيضاً".

فتلك البشارات الأربع المتقدّمات خالصة لإسماعيل وحده، ويشارك إسماعيل إسحق وغيره من إخوته في هاتين. فتلك ست نبوّات وبشارات قاهرات فيهم.<sup>5</sup> ويزعم ذلك الجلف الجرّمقاني الخبيث الغبي أن إسماعيل غير معدود في ولد إبراهيم عليه السلام، وإنما تمت هذه الكلمات وظهرت بظهور النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.<sup>6</sup> فأما قبل ذلك فقد علمت النصارى واليهود كافة أنه لم يزل بنو إبراهيم المعروفون به المنسوبون إليه في طائفة من طوائف الدنيا، فريق منهم

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit: يارب <sup>2</sup>B: ولا عقب <sup>3</sup>B: ويرثني <sup>4</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>5</sup>C and D: فيه <sup>6</sup>B:

as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your children shall inherit the lands of their enemies, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through them.’<sup>207</sup> And in addition the Torah says, ‘Abraham said, “Now I am dying, and I have no son or offspring, and so my servant, the offspring of my house, will inherit from me.” But the Lord said to him, “No, such a person will never inherit from you, but he who inherits from you will be one who issues from your loins. Go out and look at the stars of the sky, and if you can count them, you will be able to count your children as well.”’<sup>208</sup>

The four earlier announcements are clearly about Ishmael alone, and in these two Ishmael shares with Isaac and his other brothers. So these are six undeniable prophecies and announcements about them, though this rude, vicious, ignorant Jarmaqānī<sup>209</sup> claims that Ishmael is not included among the sons of Abraham (peace be upon him). These words were only fulfilled and made evident with the appearance of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), while before this all the Christians and Jews knew that descendants of Abraham, known through him and related to him, continued among the

207 Genesis 22:16–18.

208 Genesis 15:4–5.

209 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 81, n. 8, links this term to the Syriac *Gramqāya*, which refers to the area of Beth Garmai in northern Mesopotamia; see further Gaudeul, *Riposte*, p. 26, n. 95 (Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, Beirut, 1990, vol. 2, pp. 150–151, identifies Jarmaq as a small town in Persia on the road between Iṣfahān and Nīsābūr, though he says nothing about any religious derivation). It appears to have been used routinely in this period to refer to Christians who belonged to the Nestorian Church and would thus have links to somewhere to the north of the capital: in the early 10th century Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarī, mentions a certain Yaḥyā al-Jarmaqānī (or Jurmuqānī) as a secretary of the Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (*Taʾrīkh*, p. 1182/ trans. C.E. Bosworth, *Storm and stress along the northern frontiers of the Abbasid Caliphate (The history of al-Ṭabarī 10)*, Albany NY, 1991, p. 29), while towards the end of the 10th century ‘Abd al-Jabbār refers to the Nestorian philosopher Abū Bishr Mattā ibn Yūnus as ‘Mattā al-Jarmaqānī’ (*Tathbīt dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, ed. ‘A.-K. ‘Uthmān, Istanbul, 1966, p. 192; in their edition of the *Tathbīt*, p. 153, Reynolds and Samir give the vocalisation *al-Jarimmaqānī*, and translate it as ‘Grammatikos’).

D.S. Margoliouth brings together a number of appearances of the term in Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī’s *Kitāb al-aghānī*, from about the same time (*On ‘The Book of Religion and Empire’ by ‘Alī b. Rabban al-Tabarī (from Proceedings of the British Academy 16)*, London, 1930, p. 19), arguing that they are all used pejoratively. He also identifies a pun on the qur’ānic phrase *sharr makān*, ‘worse situated’ (e.g. Q 5:60; 12:77 (given by Margoliouth, p. 18, n. 2, as 12:27; 19:75; 25:34). But ‘Alī himself does not appear to regard *Jarmaqānī* in this way: in the *Radd*, pp. 104–105 above, he uses it as a purely geographical designation without any negative overtones, while both here and below in the *Dīn wa-dawla* the fact that he sees the need to add the adjectives ‘rude, vicious, ignorant’ suggests that he did not regard the term as bearing pejorative meaning in itself.

36r بمصر خول للفراعة والقبط ممتنون مقهورون، | وفريق في ناحية البوادي  
وأرض الحجاز بالجفاء والحروب.<sup>1</sup> ثم انتقل من كان منهم بمصر إلى الشام يغادهم  
ويراوحهم فيها من حولهم بالحرب. ثم لم يلبثوا أن صاروا مشردين مطرودين،<sup>2</sup>  
مسلوباً عزهم، زائلاً ملكهم منتشراً جمعهم في آفاق الدنيا وأقطارها، قد ضربت  
فيهم فوائج السودان وأمواج الحمران حتى إذا ظهر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>3</sup>  
تمت النبوات وظهرت البشارات بعد دهر طويل، وغلب بنو إسماعيل على من  
حولهم فهشموهم هشماً وذرّوهم في الهواء ذرّاً كما قالت الأنبياء عليهم السلام،  
وطحنوهم طحناً وانتشروا في آفاق الدنيا كالذباب، ومازجوا الأمم كالدماء  
والأرواح، وعلوهم علوّ الثرى فيما بين الهند والحبشان والسّوس الأقصى وبلاد  
الترك والخزر، وملكوا ما بين الخافقين وحيث يصطكّ موج البحرين. وظهر ذكر  
إبراهيم على أفواه الأمم كلها صباحاً مساءً،<sup>4</sup> فليس من رجل وامرأة، عبد أو  
أمة، غني أو فقير، مسرور أو مكروب، في برّ أو بحر، إلّا وهو يوحد الله ويكبرّ إليه  
إبراهيم ويعوذ به.

فأمّا اليهودية فإنّما كانت ظهرت في طائفة من الناس. وأمّا المسيحية فإنّها وإن  
كانت قد ظهرت في أمة كبيرة جليّة، فإنّه لم يكن لهم<sup>5</sup> في بلد إبراهيم وزوجته  
سارة، ولا في بلاد آبائهما وأجدادهما، ولا في بلد هاجر وآبائهما، سلطان قاهر<sup>6</sup>  
ولا عزّ ظاهر كما جعل الله لهم | بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>B: والحروب 2 Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: ومطرودين 3B: صلعم 4 Reading with

B; A: صباح مساء 5 Reading with C and D; A and B: له 6 B omits this word. 7B: صلعم

peoples of the earth. A group of them were in Egypt as possessions of the Pharaohs and Egyptians, humiliated and subdued. | A group were in the region of the Bedouin and the land of the Ḥijāz, amid harshness and battles. Then those who were in Egypt moved to Syria, and the people around them inflicted battle on them day in and day out. They soon became fugitives and exiles, with their power stripped away, their kingdom short-lived, and their community dispersed through the far-flung regions of the earth.<sup>210</sup> Bands of black men and waves of white men came against them until, when the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) appeared, these prophecies were eventually fulfilled and the announcements made manifest, and the People of Ishmael triumphed over those around them, smashing them into pieces, scattering them like dust in the air and grinding them into powder, as the prophets (peace be upon them) had said. They spread through the regions of the world like young locusts, and mingled with the nations like blood and the soul. They rose as high above them as the Pleiades, throughout India, Ethiopia, furthestmost Sūs, and the lands of the Turks and Khazars,<sup>211</sup> and they ruled all that is between the east and the west, and where the waves of the two seas clash together. The mention of Abraham was uttered on the lips of all the nations morning and evening, and there was no man or woman, manservant or maidservant, rich or poor, happy or sad in land or sea, who did not proclaim the oneness of God, magnify the God of Abraham and take refuge in him. 36r

Judaism, however, has only appeared among a group of people. And Christianity, although it appeared in a large and mighty community, they did not possess it in the land of Abraham or his wife Sarah, nor in the land of their fathers or grandfathers; nor in the land of Hagar or her fathers was there successful sovereignty or manifest might such as God wrought for them | through the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace). 36v

<sup>210</sup> The whole of Israelite history, from the Exodus under the Pharaohs to the diaspora under the Roman emperors, is summed up in these few sentences.

<sup>211</sup> 'Ali has already referred to Sūs as typifying the far west; the Turks and Khazars would typify the remote north and east.

وسآتي<sup>1</sup> بشهادات الأنبياء على ما ادّعت، وأبدأ بالردّ على ذلك الجلف الجرّمقاني الذي انتقص إسماعيل وعابه بما وصفه الله به. ولولا غباوته وسخفه لعلم أن لألفاظ التنزيل وجوهاً وأسراراً لا يعرفها إلا الراسخون في العلم. فقد قالت التوراة إن الله صار أسداً واقترب بني اسرائيل، وقيل فيها إن الله نار محرقة، وليس الله<sup>2</sup> بنار ولا سبع ضار، وإنما ضرب به مثلاً للغضب والاحتدام والمعاقبة والإنتقام. وسمّى المسيح رئيس حواريه الذي استرعاه أمر أمته شمعون الحجر، وسمّى أمته كلّها النعاج، وسمّى المسيح نفسه حمل الله وخروفيه. فلو عارض معارض ذلك السفیه المائق بذلك لكان له أن يقول إن العير أعزّ وأمنع من الحمل الذي يأكله الذئب ويطعم فيه الكلب والثعلب، فلا شيء في ذوات الأربع أقلّ وأضعف منه. فإن رجع ذلك الجاهل الأنوك ومن يقول بقوله إلى تأويل هذه الأسماء رجعنا نحن أيضاً إلى التأويل وقلنا: "إن تأويل العير يشتمل على عدة معان منها: أن الله تبارك وتعالى أشار بهذا الإسم أن إسماعيل عليه السلام يأوى المعاطش والقلوات ويمنع جانبه، ويكون مغوراً غيوراً كالعير الذي يأوى البراري ويخصى الذكران<sup>3</sup> من بحشانه للغيرة ويغير على قطعان غيره من الفحولة، فلا يزال يحارب الفحل ويرأكه ويكادمه حتى يغلب على عاتقه وقطيعه. فإذا حازهنّ حرسهنّ وذبت عنهنّ وطلب انتاجهنّ ولم يأكلهنّ كما تفعل الأسد والذئب، فإن تلك إنما تطلب الغلبة للأكل والإستراط وتطلب الأعيار الغلبة للنشاط والإنبساط.

وسماه الله بهذا الإسم أيضاً لئلا يجد الجاحدون سبيلاً إلى إنكار مسكن إسماعيل عليه السلام من البراري، وأنّ الله صيره في تلك البراري لمعنى جليل القدر لطيف، وهو أنه جلّ وعزّ أحبّ أن يصون نسبه ويحفظ حرّيته من أن ينال بمثل ما<sup>4</sup> نيل به غيره من الإسترقاق في الأمم كما سبي ومُرّق غيره.

مثلاً: 4C and D: الذكر 3C and D: 2B omits this word. 1B: وسياقي



I will now adduce testimonies of the prophets in support of what I have claimed, though I should first refute this rude Jarmaqānī who has disparaged Ishmael and blamed him because of the way in which God has described him. Were it not for his foolishness and simple-mindedness, he would know that the words of revelation have reasons and mysteries that only the expert in knowledge comprehend. Thus, the Torah says that God became a lion and made the People of Israel its prey;<sup>212</sup> it says in it that God is a burning fire,<sup>213</sup> although God is neither a fire nor a dangerous beast. Rather, this is given as an image for anger, fury, punishment and vengeance. Christ called the leader of his disciples, to whom he gave care over his community, Simon the Rock;<sup>214</sup> and he called his whole community sheep;<sup>215</sup> and Christ called himself the Lamb of God and his young sheep.<sup>216</sup> Now if anyone were to answer back to this foolish sniveller about this, he could say that the wild ass is more powerful and formidable than the lamb, which the wolf devours and the dog and fox covet. There is none among four-legged animals that is smaller than it or meeker. If this stupid ignoramus and those who talk like him resort to giving interpretations of these names, we too will resort to interpretation and say: The interpretation of 'wild ass' involves a number of expressions, among them that God, blessed and mighty, indicates by this name that Ishmael (peace be upon him) would take refuge in dry and waterless places, protect his mate, and be daring and predatory, like the wild ass that takes refuge in the deserts, castrates the male among its young donkeys out of jealousy, and pursues the herds of other males, keeping on fighting the male, kicking it and biting it until it has overcome its female and its herd. When it has gained them, it protects them and defends them, and looks after | their young, not devouring them like the lion and the wolf. Such as these only seek to overcome in order to devour and swallow up, while wild asses seek to overcome out of ardour and exhilaration.

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God also called him by this name so that the unbelievers would not be able to find a way to refuse Ishmael (peace be upon him) a dwelling place in the deserts. For God placed him in these deserts for a significant and admirable reason, which is that he, great and mighty, might protect his lineage and safeguard his liberty from being harmed in the way that others were harmed by being enslaved among the nations, as others were taken captive and separated.

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<sup>212</sup> Numbers 24:9.

<sup>213</sup> Exodus 24:17.

<sup>214</sup> Matthew 16:18.

<sup>215</sup> John 10:2–16, 21:15–17.

<sup>216</sup> John 1:29–30, where Jesus is called this by John the Baptist.

فليفهم ذلك الخيَّاب الخاسر هذه المعاني، ولا يتمرس بمن أخبر<sup>1</sup> الله تبارك وتعالى أنه قد بارك عليه وعظمه جداً جداً. فإن من صغر من عظمه<sup>2</sup> الله كان كمن عظم من صغره الله، وكفى بمن فعل ذلك خزيًا وتوبيخًا.

وللعير معنى أيضًا كان يستعمله العجم وسائر الأمم فإنهم كانوا يسمون من كان فاتكًا نهيكًا نجدًا "جور". ولذلك سُمي بهرام "جور". ومعنى الجور هو العير، وبه سُمي أهل طبرستان "الجورية". ولهذا سُمي الرجل الشجاع الأريحي "جور مردان" أي عير الرجال، كقول العرب للرجل الشجاع: "فلان كبش العشيرة"، وتشبيههم إياه بفحولة الإبل وقرومها وبغير ذلك من الحيوان.

عظم: Reading with B; A: أخبره<sup>1</sup>B:

Let this hopeless failure comprehend these expressions and not be at odds against one whom God, blessed and mighty, has declared that he has blessed him and made him exceedingly great. For one who diminishes him whom God has made great is like one who makes him great whom God has diminished. It is enough that the person does this shamefully and with reproach.

‘Wild ass’ also has a meaning which the Persians and all nations have given it. For they used to call someone who was dangerous, untamed and dauntless *jūr*: thus, Bahrām was called *jūr*.<sup>217</sup> Its meaning is ‘wild ass’, and because of it the people of Ṭabaristān are called *Jūrīyya*. For this reason, a bold, expansive man is called *jūr mardān*, which is ‘the ass of men’. It is like what the Arabs say about a courageous man, ‘He is like the ram of the clan’, and like the comparison they make between him and the most excellent camels and stud horses, and other such animals.

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<sup>217</sup> This is the Sassanian King Bahram V (r. 421–438).

## الباب العاشر

في نبوّات الأنبياء على النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>1</sup> وعليهم<sup>2</sup>

وقد قدّمتُ ذكر أربع نبوّات في إسماعيل عليه السلام، فيها من الشواهد على حقيقة أمة النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> ما لا يجهله إلا جاهل<sup>4</sup> ولا يحجده إلا غيبي<sup>5</sup>،<sup>37v</sup> وبأنّه لو لم يُبعث النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>6</sup> لبطلت النبوّات واستحالت. وأنا ذاكر ممّا بقي من نبوّات الأنبياء عليهم السلام عليه ما هو كالمشاهدة والعيان، فإنّ منهم من قد وصف زمانه وبلده ومبعثه وتبعه وأنصاره وصرّح بإسمه تصرّيحاً.

فالنبوة الخامسة الدالة عليه المشيرة إلى نبوّته وحقّه قول موسى عليه السلام في الفصل الحادي عشر من التوراة من السفر الخامس، وهو الأخير لبني إسرائيل: "إنّ الربّ إلهكم يقيم نبياً مثلي من بينكم ومن إخوتكم<sup>7</sup> فاسمعوا له". وقالت التوراة في هذا الفصل بعينه مؤكّداً لهذا القول وموضّحاً له، إنّ الله قال الربّ لموسى عليه السلام: "إنّي مقيم لهم نبياً مثلك من بين إخوتهم وأيّما رجل لم يسمع كلماتي التي يؤدّيها ذلك الرجل باسمي أنا أنتقم منه". ولم يُقم الله نبياً من إخوة بني إسرائيل إلاّ محمّداً عليه السلام، وقوله: "من بينهم" تأكيداً وتحديداً أنّه من ولد أبيهم لا من ولد عمومته. فأما المسيح عليه السلام وسائر الأنبياء صلّى الله عليهم<sup>8</sup> فإنّهم كانوا منهم أنفسهم. ومن ظنّ بأنّ الله تعالى لم يميّز بين من هو من القوم أنفسهم ومن هو إخوتهم فقد ظنّ عجزاً.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>B: الجاهل <sup>5</sup>B: الغيبي <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: وإخوتكم <sup>8</sup>B: وإخوتكم

صلّى الله عليهم omits.

## On the prophecies of the prophets about the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace, and also them)

I have already mentioned four prophecies about Ishmael (peace be upon him), in which are testimonies to the true nature | of the community of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) that only an ignoramus would not recognise, and only a fool would reject, and according to which the prophecies would be invalidated and proved impossible if the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) had not been sent. I will mention the rest of the prophecies of the prophets (peace be upon them) about him, which are like things familiar and obvious. Among them were those who have described his time, his country, his mission, his followers and his helpers, and have given clear explanations of his name.

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The fifth prophecy that points to him and indicates his prophetic status and his truthfulness are the words of Moses (peace be upon him) in Chapter 11 of the fifth book of the Torah, the last, to the People of Israel: 'The Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me from among you and from among your brothers, and you shall listen to him.'<sup>218</sup> In this same chapter the Torah says in confirmation and verification of these words, 'The Lord said to Moses (peace be upon him): I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers, and whichever man does not hear my words that this man will relay in my name, I will avenge myself upon him.'<sup>219</sup> God has never raised up a prophet from among the brothers of the People of Israel except Muḥammad (peace be upon him), and his words 'from among them' are a confirmation and specification that he was from the children of their father not from the children of his uncles. Now Christ (peace be upon him) and the other prophets (may God bless them) were from them themselves, and whoever thinks that God almighty has not distinguished between someone from the people themselves and someone from their brothers is deficient in thinking.

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<sup>218</sup> Deuteronomy 18:15.

<sup>219</sup> Deuteronomy 18:18–19.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ ادَّعى أَنَّ هذه النبوة في المسيح عليه السلام فقد ظلم لخلّتين وتجاهل من وجهين، أحدهما أَنَّ المسيح عليه السلام من ولد داوود، وداوود<sup>1</sup> منهم أنفسهم وليس من إخوتهم. | والثانية أَنَّ مَنْ قال مرّة إنّ المسيح هو<sup>2</sup> خالق غير مخلوق ثمّ زعم أَنَّ المسيح مثل موسى، فقد تناقض خبره وتذبذب قوله، وَمَنْ زعم أَنَّ هذه النبوة في يشوع بن نون فقد أخطأ، لأنّ يشوع ليس يُعدّ في الأنبياء ولم يؤدّ عن الله تعالى إلى بني اسرائيل شيئاً سوى ما أدّاه موسى عليه السلام، ولأنّهُ من القوم أنفسهم وليس من إخوتهم. والنبيّ الذي أقامه الله تعالى من بني إخوتهم هو محمد صلى الله عليه وسلّم.<sup>3</sup> وهو الذي من خالفه إنتقم الله منه، فقد ترون آثار النعمة بيّنة على مَنْ خالفه، ودلائل النعمة ظاهرة على مَنْ قبله.

وقال موسى في هذا السفر في الفصل العشرين: "إِنَّ الربَّ<sup>4</sup> جاء من طور سينين، وطلع لنا من ساعير وظهر من جبل فاران ومعه وعن يمينه ربوات القديسين، فنحهم العزّ وحبّهم إلى الشعوب ودعا بجميع قديسيه بالبركة". ففاران هي البلدة التي سكنها إسماعيل عليه السلام، ولذلك قدّم الله ذكرها في التوراة في قوله: "فكان يتعلّم الرمي في برية فاران". وقد علم الناس كلّهم أَنَّ إسماعيل سكن مكّة، فولده وأعقابه فيها وفيما حولها يعرفون مأوى جدّهم ولا يجهلون بلده ووطنه. وقد طلع الربّ من فاران، فإنّ لم يكن كما ذكرنا، فليوجدونا ربّاً ظهر من جبل فاران، ولن<sup>5</sup> يفعلوا. فأما اسم الربّ هاهنا فإنّه يقع على النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم،<sup>6</sup> وهي كلمة مستعملة من العرب والعجم | في الله عزّ وجلّ وفي عباده كقولك: "ربّ البيت"، وقول السريانيين لمن أرادوا تفخيمه "مار"، أي "يا ربّي ويا سيدي"، و"مار" بالسريانية هو "الربّ".

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>A note in the margin, written in the same

hand, in A reads: أي النبيّ عليه السلام. <sup>5</sup>B: ولم <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم

Anyone who claims that this prophecy is about Christ (peace be upon him) is wrong on two aspects, and appears to know nothing in two respects. One of these is that Christ (peace be upon him) was from the children of David, and David was from among them themselves not from among their brothers. | 38r  
 And the other is that for one who says at one time that Christ is Creator and not created and then claims that Christ is like Moses, his statement contradicts itself and his teaching wavers about. And one who claims that this prophecy concerns Joshua son of Nun is wrong because Joshua is not included among the prophets and did not convey anything about God almighty to the People of Israel except what Moses (peace be upon him) had conveyed, and because he was from the people themselves and not from their brothers. But the prophet whom God almighty raised up from the descendants of their brothers was Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace). He is the one against whose opponents God has vengeance, and you may indeed see the effects of vengeance clear on those who oppose him, and the signs of grace manifest on those who acknowledge him.

Moses said in this Book in Chapter 20: 'The Lord came from Mount Sinai and appeared to us from Seir and became manifest from mount Paran. With him on his right hand were myriads of the holy ones. To these he granted power and made them to be loved by the people, and he invoked blessing on all his saints.'<sup>220</sup> Now Paran is the area in which Ishmael (peace be upon him) dwelt, and for this reason God mentions it earlier in the Torah in his words: 'He learned archery in the desert of Paran.'<sup>221</sup> Everybody knows that Ishmael dwelt in Mecca, and his children and descendants there and around know the habitation of their ancestor and are not ignorant of his country and region. And 'the Lord appeared from Paran': if this is not as we have said, let them show us a lord who was manifest from mount Paran, though they will not be able to. The word 'lord' here refers to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace). It is a word employed among Arabs and foreigners for God, great and mighty, | 38v  
 and for his servants, such as your saying 'lord of the house'. The Syriac-speakers' term for one whom they wish to honour is *mār*, which is 'my lord', 'my master', *mār* being 'lord' in Syriac.

<sup>220</sup> Deuteronomy 33:2–3.

<sup>221</sup> Genesis 21:20–21.

## نبوات داوود على النبي صلى الله عليهما وسلم كثيراً

وقال داوود النبي عليه السلام في المزمور الخامس والأربعين: "من أجل هذا بارك الله عليك إلى الأبد، فتقلد السيف أيها الجبار لأن بهاءك وحمدك البهاء والحمد الغالب". إركب كلمة الحق وسمت التأله، فإن ناموسك وشرائعك مقرونة بهيبة يمينك، وسهامك مسنونة والأمم يخرون تحتك. ولا نعرف أحداً يجب له هذه المعاني من تقلد السيف وشخذ النصول، وهيبة اليمين، ووقوع الأمم تحتها، إلا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>2</sup> فقد ركب كلمة الحق، وتواضع لله بالديانة، وجاهد المشركين حتى ظهر الدين.

وقال داوود عليه السلام أيضاً في المزمور الثمانية والأربعين: "إن ربنا عظيم محمود جداً، وفي قرية إلها وفي جبله يوجد<sup>3</sup> قدّوس ومحمد، وعمت الأرض فرحاً". فهذا من نبوة داوود عليه السلام هو الإبانة والتصريح الذي لا تلابسه شكوك،<sup>4</sup> فقد سمي<sup>5</sup> النبي تسمية.<sup>6</sup>

وقال داوود عليه السلام في المزمور الخمسين: إن الله أظهر من صهيون إكليلاً محموداً، فالله يأتي ولا يهمل، وتحرق النيران بين يديه وتضطرم حواليه اضطراماً.<sup>7</sup> أفأترون أن لا يخلي داوود النبي عليه السلام شيئاً من نبواته من ذكر محمد أو محمود كما قد تقرأون؟ ومعنى قوله: "إكليلاً محموداً" أي أنه "رأس وإمام ممجّد<sup>8</sup> محمود". ومعنى "محمد ومحمود وحيد" شيء واحد في اللغة وإنما ضرب بالإكليل مثلاً للرياسة<sup>9</sup> والإمامة.

<sup>1</sup>C and D: تقليد <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>4</sup>B: الشكوك <sup>5</sup>A and B: سمّاه <sup>6</sup>B adds:

لكنّه لم يصرّح بلفظ محمود <sup>7</sup>B: اضطراماً حواليه <sup>8</sup>B, C and D: محمد (wrongly). <sup>9</sup>Reading with B;

للربانية: illegible in A; C and D:



**The prophecies of David about the Prophet (may God bless them  
and give them peace)**

The prophet David (peace be upon him) says in Psalm 45: 'Because of this, God has given you blessing for ever. So gird yourself with the sword, O great one, because your splendour and praise [*ḥamd*] are conquering splendour and praise [*al-ḥamd*]. Ride upon the word of truth and on the course of divinity, for your law and injunctions are at the leisure of your right hand. Your arrows are sharpened and the nations fall down under you.'<sup>222</sup> We know of no one to whom these matters of girding on the sword, sharpening arrows, leisure of right hand and nations falling down under him rightly refer except the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace). For he rode upon the word of truth, humbled himself before God in faith, and strove against the polytheists until religion was manifest.

David (peace be upon him) says in Psalm 48: 'Our Lord is great and greatly praised [*maḥmūd*]; in the city of our God and in his mountain there is a holy one and Muḥammad, and joy prevails through all the earth.'<sup>223</sup> This prophecy of David (peace be upon him) is clarity and explanation, and doubts cannot obscure it because he names the Prophet explicitly.

David (peace be upon him) says in Psalm 50: 'From Zion God caused to appear a crown greatly praised [*maḥmūd*]. God will come and will not fail to see; fires will burn before him and will flare up in a blaze around him.'<sup>224</sup> Can you not see that the prophet David (peace be upon him) does not omit from | his prophecies any mention of Muḥammad or Maḥmūd, as you can read yourselves? The meaning of his words 'a crown greatly praised' is 'a head and leader Muḥammad and greatly praised'. And the meaning of Muḥammad, *maḥmūd*, and *ḥamūd* is linguistically one, while he makes 'crown' an image of headship and leadership.

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<sup>222</sup> Psalm 45:2–5.

<sup>223</sup> Psalm 48:1–2.

<sup>224</sup> Psalm 50:2–3.

وقال أيضاً في المزمور الثاني والسبعين ما أكّد به وشدد النبوات المتقدمة: "إنّه يجوز من البحر إلى البحر ومن لدن الأنهار إلى منقطع الأرض، وإنّه يخزّ أهل الجزائر بين يديه على ركبهم وتلحس أعداؤه التراب. تأتيه ملوك تارسيس والجزائر بالقرايين وتقرب إليه<sup>1</sup> ملوك سبأ وملوك سبأ القرايين، وتسجد له الملوك كلّهم، وتدين له الأمم كلّها بالطاعة والإنقياد، لأنّه يخلص المضطهد البائس ممّن هو أقوى منه، ويفتقد الضعيف الذي لا ناصر له، ويرأف بالضعفاء والمساكين، وينجي أنفسهم من الضرّ والضيم، وتعزّ عليه دماؤهم، وإنّه يبتقى ويعطي من ذهب بلاد سبأ ويصلّي عليه في كلّ وقت، ويبارك عليه كلّ يوم مثل الزروع الكثيرة على وجه الأرض، وتطلع ثماره على رؤوس الجبال كالذي يطلع من لبنان، وينبت في مدينته مثل عشب<sup>2</sup> الأرض ويدوم ذكره إلى الأبد، وأنّ اسمه لموجود قبل الشمس، فالأمم كلّهم يتبرّكون به وكلّهم يحمّدونه".

فهذه نبوة شافية كافية<sup>3</sup> ما فيها لبس ولا إظلام. فما نعلم أحداً ملك ما بين البحر والبحر وبين الأنهار التي ذكرها الله في التوراة وهي دجلة والفرات ويشون وجيحون وخرّت الملوك بين يديه سجداً على الركب ولحس أعداؤه التراب وأنته ملوك اليمن بالقرايين إلّا النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup> وأمته وإلّا مكة وما فيها من أثر قدم إبراهيم. ولا نعلم أحداً يصلّي ويبارك عليه في كلّ وقت غير محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup>، وهو قول الأمم: "اللهم صلّ على محمد وعلى آل محمد وبارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد". فآية دلالة أشهر ونبوة أظهر وأنور من هذه. ولقد ختم داود النبيّ عليه

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<sup>1</sup>B: له <sup>2</sup>B: عيب (sic) - l.c.; a note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: العيب غصن

كافية<sup>3</sup>B: النخيل الذي ينبت عليه الخوص، والخوص ورق شجر النخيل النابت على السعف

صلعم<sup>5</sup>B: صلعم<sup>4</sup>B: شافية

He also says in Psalm 72 to confirm and strengthen the preceding prophecies: 'He will pass from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the end of the earth; the people of the islands shall fall down before him on their knees, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring him offerings, and the kings of Sabā' and the kings of Sābā shall approach him with offerings. All the kings shall prostrate before him and all the nations shall yield to him in obedience and submission, for he will free the miserable oppressed from the one who is stronger than him, and he will seek out the weak who has no helper, and have pity on the weak and miserable and deliver their souls from harm and injury, and their blood will be precious to him. He will endure, and he will be given gold from the lands of Sabā'; prayer shall be made for him at all times, and blessing invoked upon him every day, like a great many plants on the face of the earth. He will cause his fruit to grow on the tops of the mountains, like those which grow on Lebanon, and in his town he will make such things grow as the green grass of the earth. The memory of him will endure for ever. His name exists before the sun, so that all nations shall be blessed by him and they will all praise him.'<sup>225</sup>

This is an unequivocal and sufficient prophecy containing no uncertainty or lack of clarity. For we do not know of any king between the sea and the sea, and between the rivers which God mentions in the Torah, the Tigris, Euphrates, Pison and Gihon,<sup>226</sup> before whom kings have fallen down in prostration | on their knees, whose enemies have licked the dust and to whom the kings of Yemen have brought offerings, except the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and his community, and except Mecca and the traces there of Abraham's feet.<sup>227</sup> Nor do we know of any who is prayed for and blessing invoked upon at all times other than Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) in the words of the nations, 'O our God, bless Muḥammad and bless the family of Muḥammad, and give blessings to Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad.' What proof is better known and prophecy more obvious and luminous than this, particularly when the prophet David (peace be upon

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<sup>225</sup> Psalm 72:8–17. The concluding words can be translated 'give him *ḥamd*', or as Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 90, suggests 'call him *Muḥammad*'.

<sup>226</sup> Genesis 2:11–14.

<sup>227</sup> This is an allusion to the *maqām Ibrāhīm*, a stone near the ka'ba where, according to Islamic belief, Abraham stood while rebuilding the shrine. The reference links Makka into the history that 'Alī is striving to find in these quotations.

السلام نبوته هذه بأن قال: "فالأمم كلهم يتبركون به<sup>1</sup> ويحمدونه ويسمونه محمداً؟  
ومعنى محمد ومحمود واحد.

وقال داوود عليه السلام في المزمور المائة والعشرة: "إنّ الربّ عن يمينك وهو  
يكسر في يوم رجزه<sup>2</sup> الملوك ويضعف ركن الملك ويحكم بينهم بالحقّ ويكثر القتلى  
والجيف ويقطع<sup>3</sup> رؤوس بشر كثير في الأرض، ويشرب في سفره من ماء  
الأودية، ومن أجل هذا يسمو للبعالي رأسه". فهذه أيضاً صفة كالعيان. فمن ذا  
الذي كان الربّ عن يمينه والذي حكم بالحقّ وضرب الرقاب وأكثر القتلى  
والجيف غيره وغير أمته صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>4</sup>؟

وقال في المزمور المائة والتاسع والأربعين: "من أجل أنّ الربّ ارتاح لشعبه<sup>5</sup>  
وتطوّل على المساكين بالخلّاص، فليتعرّز الأبرار بالكرامة ويسبحوه<sup>6</sup> على  
مضاجعهم، ويكبروا<sup>7</sup> الله<sup>8</sup> بخناجرهم، لأنّ في أيديهم السيف ذا<sup>9</sup> الشفرتين  
لانتقام من الشعوب، وتوبيخ الأمم وإثقال ملوكهم بالقيود وعليتهم<sup>40r</sup> ومكرميهم  
بالسلاسل ليحملهم على القدر المكتوب المبرم فالحمد لجميع أبراره". أمّا ترون—  
يهديكم الله—هذه الصفات خالصة للنبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم ولأُمّته؟ فهو الذي  
معه السيف ذو الشفرتين، وهو المنتقم بأُمّته من جبابرة فارس وطغاة الروم  
وغيرهم، وهو الذي قيّدت أُمّته الملوك وساقّت جلّتهم وأولادهم في السلاسل  
والأغلال، وهم الذين يسبحون الله على مضاجعهم ويكبرونه صباحاً مساءً<sup>10</sup>  
تكبيراً وفي كلّ وقت، وذلك قولهم<sup>11</sup>: "الله أكبر كبيراً والحمد لله كثيراً".

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B: زجره (sic). <sup>3</sup>B: وتقطع <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>B: بشعبه <sup>6</sup>C and D: ويسبحونه

<sup>7</sup>C and D: ويكرّموا (wrongly). <sup>8</sup>B: لله <sup>9</sup>B: ذو <sup>10</sup>Reading with B; A: صباح مساء، cf. p. 334 above.

<sup>11</sup>B: بقولهم

him) ends this prophecy of his by saying, 'For all the nations shall be blessed by him and will highly praise him, and will call him Muḥammad'?—the meaning of Muḥammad and *maḥmūd* is the same.

In Psalm 110 David (peace be upon him) says, 'The Lord is at your right hand, and on the day of his wrath he will strike down the kings and weaken the support of the kingdom; he will judge between them with right, he will multiply those who have been killed and the corpses, and will cut off the heads of many men in the earth. He will drink the water of the valleys in his journeying, and because of this his head shall be raised to the heights.'<sup>228</sup> This also is a depiction that is quite clear. For who was the one at whose right hand was the Lord, and who judged with right, who struck the riders and who multiplied those killed and the corpses, other than him and his community (may God bless him and give him peace)?

He says in Psalm 149: 'For the Lord is pleased with his people, and has bestowed salvation on the poor. Let the pious excel in honour and praise him on their beds, and exult God with their throats. For in their hands is a two-edged sword to take revenge upon the peoples and to conquer the nations, to weigh down their kings with shackles, and their leaders | and esteemed ones with chains, to carry them to the judgement that is written and unavoidable. So praise [*ḥamd*] to all his pious ones.'<sup>229</sup> Do you not see, may God guide you, that these attributes clearly belong to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him Peace) and his community? For it is he who is accompanied by the two-edged sword, and he who through his community took revenge upon the oppressors of Persia, the tyrants of the Romans and others, and he whose community bound kings, and drove their greatness and their children in chains and fetters, and it is they who praise God on their beds and extol him greatly morning and evening and at all times. These are their utterances: 'God is most great', and 'High praise to God'.

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<sup>228</sup> Psalm 110:5–7.

<sup>229</sup> Psalm 149:4–9.

وقال عليه السلام في المزمور المائة والثاني والخمسين، فسَمَّى البلد والأهل، فلم يدغ موضع مقال ولا اعتلال، وهو مزبور يُنسب إلى أشعيا النبي عليه السلام:<sup>1</sup> "لترتاح<sup>2</sup> البوادي وقراها ولتصِرَ أرض قيذار<sup>3</sup> مروجاً وليسبح سَكَّان الكهوف ويهتفوا من قُلل الجبال بحمد الربّ ويذيعوا تسايحه في الجزائر، لأنّ الربّ يجيئ كالجبّار وكالرجل المحرّب<sup>4</sup> المتلطيّ للتكبر، فهو يزجر ويتجبر ويقتل أعداءه". فلمن البوادي يا بني عمي—يهديكم الله—إلا لهذه الأُمّة، أو من قيذار إلا ولد إسماعيل عليه السلام، وهم سَكَّان الكهوف الذين يحمّدون الربّ ويذيعون تسايحه في الهواجر والأشجار، ومن ذا الذي زجر وتجبر وقتل أعداءه غير محمّد صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup> وأُمته؟ فأما معنى قوله: "إنّ الربّ يجيئ"، فقد بينّا أنّنا إسم واقع على السادات والعظماء.

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### نبوّات إشعيا على النبي صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>6</sup>

قال في الفصل الثاني من كتابه:<sup>7</sup> "إنّ الربّ يتعزّز ويتعالى يومئذ وحده على جميع صنوبر لبنان المستعلية<sup>8</sup> الشاخنة، وعلى جميع شجر البلوط التي بأرض بيسان، وعلى جميع الجبال الرواسي، وعلى كلّ قلة منيفة، وعلى كلّ قصر رفيع، وعلى كلّ جبل منيع، وعلى جميع سفن تارسييس، وعلى كلّ منظرّة رائعة بهيّة، ويبيد الأوثان بيدودة ظاهرة، ويغيّب في صدوع الصخور وأنفاق التراب من قدام خشية الله تعالى ومن بهاء حمده". فوافق إشعيا داوود النبي عليهما السلام في قوله: "إنّ بهاءك

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of A reads: مزبور منسوب لأشعيا. <sup>2</sup>B: تاج (sic),

a misreading of the original MS. <sup>3</sup>B: ولتصارض قيذان (sic), a misreading of the original MS.

<sup>4</sup>C and D: المحرّب (sic). <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B omits: من كتابه. <sup>8</sup>C and D: المستطيلة

He (peace be upon him) says in Psalm 152, naming the country and the people, and not giving space for word or excuse (this is a psalm attributed to the prophet Isaiah, peace be upon him), ‘Let the deserts and their settlements exalt, and let the land of Kedar become meadows. Let dwellers in caves sing praise, let them cry out with praise [*ḥamd*] of the Lord from the mountain tops, and make known his praises in the islands. For the Lord is coming like a colossus and like a man of war burning with pride; he will drive back his enemies, reveal his strength to them and kill them.’<sup>230</sup> My cousins, may God guide you, who possesses the deserts other than this community, or who is Kedar other than the descendants of Ishmael (peace be upon him),<sup>231</sup> living in caves and praising the Lord and making known his praises each midday and dawn? And who is it drove back his enemies, revealed his strength to them and killed them, other than Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) and his community? As to the meaning of his words, ‘the Lord is coming’, we have shown above that it is a term that refers to leaders and nobles.<sup>232</sup>

**The prophecies of Isaiah about the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace)**

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He says in Chapter 2 of his book, ‘On that day the Lord will be mighty, and alone exalted over all the pines of Lebanon that are high and lofty, over all the oak trees in the land of Bashan, over all the heights of the mountains, over every high summit, over every tall tower, over every inaccessible mountain, over every ship of Tarshish, and over every glorious and magnificent watchtower. He will utterly destroy the idols for all to see, and will provide concealment in clefts of the rocks and tunnels in the dust from the coming of the terror of the Lord almighty and from the splendour of his praise [*ḥamd*].’<sup>233</sup> Isaiah agrees with the prophet David (peace be upon them) in his words: ‘Your splendour and praise

230 Isaiah 42:11–13. As Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 92, n. 1, points out, these verses were among those incorporated into the Psalter of the Church of the East.

231 According to Genesis 25:13, Kedar was Ishmael’s second son. Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, p. 3/trans. p. 3, also lists Kedar (Qaydhar) as Ismā’il’s second son, though he traces Muḥammad through Ismā’il’s first son Nābit.

232 As ‘Alī has shown with regard to his last quotation from the Pentateuch (above, pp. 342–343), the title ‘lord’ need not always be understood to refer to God; cf. also below pp. 362–365.

233 Isaiah 2:12–19.

وحمدك هو الحمد الغالب،<sup>1</sup> فلكنّهما<sup>2</sup> خرجا من مشكاة واحدة. فأما تأويل الجبال والشجر فإنهم الأكابر والأصاغر والملوك، ومثل ذلك كثير في كتبهم.

وقال في الفصل الثالث<sup>3</sup> عن الله تعالى: "إني رافع آية للأمم من بلد بعيد وأصفر لهم من أقاصي الأرض صفيراً فيأتون سراعاً عجلاً، لا يملّون ولا يعثرون ولا ينعسون<sup>4</sup> ولا ينامون، ولا يحلّون مناطقهم ولا ينقطع معقد خفافهم، سهاهم مسنونة وقسيهم موترة، وحوافر خيلهم كالجلاميد صلابة، وعجلهم مسرعة مثل الزوابع، وزئيرهم كنهم الليوث وكشبل الأسد الذي يزأرونهم الفريسة، فلا ينجو منهم ناج، ويرهقهم يومئذ مثل دويّ البحر واصطكاكه، ويرمون بأبصارهم إلى الأرض فلا يرون إلا النكبات والظلمات، وينكسف النور عن عجاج جموعهم". فهذا قول الله عزّ وجلّ، وهؤلاء بنو إسماعيل عليه السلام وأمة<sup>5</sup> النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>6</sup> الذين صفر الله لهم صفيراً فجأؤوا من بلادهم سراعاً لا يملّون ولا يسأمون، وكانت سهاهم مسنونة وقسيهم موترة وحوافر خيولهم كالصفا والجلود وزئيرهم كزئير الليوث، وهم الذين اقترسوا الفرائس شرقاً وغرباً، فما نجا من أيديهم ناج، وصارت الجبابرة عندهم كالنعاج، وثار من زحوفهم العجاج، وضاق بهم المناهج والفجاج.

وقال في الفصل الخامس<sup>7</sup> مفسراً لما تقدّم من نبوّاته عليه السلام: "إنّ الأمة التي كانت في الظلمات رأت نوراً باهراً، والذين كانوا في الدجى وتحت ظلال الموت

قوله في الفصل<sup>2</sup> A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: فكنّهما<sup>1</sup> C and D:

الثالث الخ ذكر نحو هذا في الأصحاح الخامس من نبوة اشعيا<sup>3</sup> Reading with C and D; A and B:

قوله في<sup>6</sup> A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: صلعم<sup>5</sup> B: أمة<sup>4</sup> يتعشون

الفصل الخامس الخ ذكر نحو هذا في الأصحاح الثاني من أشعيا.



are conquering praise', and it is as though they both derive from the same niche. As to the interpretation of the mountains and the trees, they are the high, the low and kings. Such matters are frequent in their books.

In Chapter 3 he says from God almighty, 'I will raise up a sign to the nations from a distant land, and I will signal to them from the ends of the earth and they will come to me speedily, swiftly; they will not be weary and will not stumble; they will not be drowsy and will not sleep, they will not loosen their girdles, and the fastening of their shoes will not be broken. Their arrows are sharpened and their bows are taut; the hooves of their horses are as hard as rock, and their speed is as rapid as storms; their roaring is like the voraciousness of lions and like the lion cub which bawls and roars at its prey, so that none can be saved from him. On that day he will overtake them like the echoing and resounding of the sea. They will cast their eyes to | the earth, and will see only disasters and gloom, and the light will be darkened from the dust of their hordes.'<sup>234</sup> These are the words of God, great and mighty, and these are the People of Ishmael (peace be upon him) and the community of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) to whom God signalled and they came from their lands speedily, untiring and unflagging, with their arrows sharpened and their bows taut, the hooves of their horses like stone and rock, their roaring like the roaring of lions. It is they who tore apart the prey in east and west, and none could escape their hands. With them tyrants became like sheep, the dust rose up from their advancing, and the roads and passes were too narrow for them.

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In Chapter 5, interpreting his earlier prophecies (peace be upon him) he says, 'The community who were in darkness have seen a dazzling light, and those who were in dreariness and under the shadow of death, light has shone

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<sup>234</sup> Isaiah 5:26–30.

سطع عليهم الضوء"، فلقد<sup>1</sup> أكثر من التبّع والأحزاب ولم تستكثر للإغتياب<sup>2</sup> بهم.<sup>3</sup> فأما هم فإنهم فرحوا بين يديك كمن يفرح يوم الحصاد وكالذين يفرحون عند اقتسام الغنائم لأنك فككت النير الذي كان أذلهم والعصا التي كانت على أكفهم وكسرت القضيب الذي كان يستعبدهم مثل كسرك من كسرت في يوم مدين". وذلك شبيه بما وصف الله تعالى به<sup>4</sup> النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> في القرآن، وقال: ﴿إنه يضع عنهم إصرهم والأغلال التي كانت عليهم﴾. فانظروا— يهديكم الله— وتبينوا من ذا الذي فكّ النير عن ولد إبراهيم، وأبطل سلطان الأعداء، وبترقضيب الأعزّة، وهل أشرق ذلك الضوء إلّا على أهل تلك البادية<sup>4iv</sup> الظلماء من عبّاد الأوثان من ولد إسماعيل؟

وقال في هذا الفصل: "إنّه<sup>6</sup> وُلد لنا مولود ووُهب لنا ابن سلطانه على كتفه". ومعنى قوله هذا أنّ نبوّته على كتفه. فهذا في كتب السريانية التي فسّرها مارقوس، فأما في العبرانية فإنّه يقول: "إنّ على كتفه علامة النبوة"، وهي التي يسمّيها أهل الإسلام خاتم النبوة. فهذا تصرّح بصفة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>7</sup> وإشارة إلى صورته وشاماته.

وقال في الفصل العاشر<sup>8</sup> كاشفاً لما اشتبه ومبيناً لما اعتاص<sup>9</sup> من نبوّاته: "هكذا يقول الربّ إنك ستأتي من جهة التيمن من بلد بعيد ومن أرض البادية مسرعاً مقدّاً مثل الزوابع والزعازع من الرياح. ولقد رأينا منظراً رائعاً هائلاً ظالماً يظلم

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D: الإغتياب <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>C and D: عن (wrongly).

<sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر نحو هذا في الأصحاح

ذكر نحو: <sup>8</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: التاسع من أشعيا

نبوّات <sup>10</sup>B: اغتاص <sup>9</sup>C and D: هذا في الأصحاح الحادي والعشرون من أشعيا

upon them. You have multiplied followers and troops and have not stinted on jubilation for them. On their part, they delight before you like one who delights on the day of harvest and like those who delight at the division of spoils. For you have broken the yoke that subdued them, and the rod that lay on their shoulders. You have shattered the staff that had enslaved them as you shattered those you shattered on the day of Midian.<sup>235</sup> This resembles the description that God almighty gives of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) in the Qurʾān, saying, 'He will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that they used to wear'.<sup>236</sup> So look, may God guide you, and find who it was broke the yoke away from the descendants of Abraham, brought to nothing the dominion of their enemies and broke up the staff of the mighty. | Has that light risen on anyone except the people of that bleak desert, who were the idol-worshippers, descendants of Ishmael?

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He says in this Chapter, 'A child is born to us, a son is given to us. His dominion is on his shoulder.'<sup>237</sup> The meaning of this is that his prophethood is on his shoulder. This is what is in the Syriac books which Marcus has interpreted,<sup>238</sup> though in the Hebrew he<sup>239</sup> says, 'On his shoulder is the mark of prophethood', the one that the people of Islam call the seal of prophethood. This is a declaration of the attribute of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and an indication of his appearance and birthmarks.<sup>240</sup>

He says in Chapter 10, explaining what is unclear and clarifying what is not obvious in his prophecies: 'Thus says the Lord: You will come from the south, from a distant place and from a land of desert, speeding and cleaving like storms and the blasts of the winds. We have seen an appalling and astonishing vision,

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235 Isaiah 9:2–4.

236 Q 7:157.

237 Isaiah 9:6. 'Alī must have been aware of the common Christian application of this prophecy to Christ, making his application of it to Muḥammad all the more startling.

238 Above 'Alī mentions Mārquṣ as a translator, *turjumān*.

239 God.

240 In the mid-eighth century, Ibn Ishāq tells how the monk Baḥīrā identified the boy Muḥammad as a prophet from the mark between his shoulder blades, which he identified as the seal of prophethood (*Sīra*, pp. 115–116/ trans. pp. 79–81).

ومنتهباً يَنْهَبُ، فاصعدي<sup>1</sup> يا جبال عيلم وجبال الماهين،<sup>2</sup> فقد بطل جميع ما كنت تنافسين وتناقشين عليه، ومن أجل ذلك اعترت ظهري الرعدة، ودير بي كما يُدار بالمرأة النفساء، ولقد ذعرتُ حتى ما أسمع وذهلتُ حتى ما أرى، وهام قلبي وأذهلتني السمادير، وصار ما كنتُ أحبه مؤنساً أنيفاً وحشةً عندي وشيئاً هائلاً. فانصبوا يا هؤلاء الموائد وارفعوا عيونكم آيتها الربايا والجواسيس، وكلوا واشربوا ولتقم السادة القادة<sup>3</sup> إلى أترستهم فليدهنوها دهناً،<sup>4</sup> لأنّ الربّ قال لي هكذا: "امضِ فأقم الربيّة على المنطرة ليخبر<sup>5</sup> | بما يرى".<sup>6</sup> فكان الذي رأى راكبين،<sup>42r</sup> أحدهما راكب حمار والآخر راكب جمل، وسمع مقالاً كثيراً جمّاً، وأسرّ صاحب المنطرة إليّ وقال لي في أذني: "إني أنا الربّ القيوم وأنا بالمرصاد والمنظر الأعلى نهراً وليلاً.<sup>7</sup> فبينما<sup>8</sup> أنا كذلك إذ أقبل أحد الراكبين وهو يقول: "هَوْتُ هَوْتُ بابل، وتكسر جميع آلهتها المنجورة على الأرض". فهذا الذي سمعتُ من الربّ إله إسرائيل العزيز قد أنبأكم."

فهذه<sup>9</sup> أيضاً نبوة مفصحة مصرحة لا يدفعها إلّا من غشّ نفسه ونبذ رشده. فكما أنّه ليس لقائل عاقل أن يتجاسر ويتجاهل فيقول إنّّه قد كان في الدنيا راكب حمار أولى بهذه النبوة من المسيح عليه السلام، فكذلك ليس لذي ورع أولب أن يقول إنّّه كان في الدنيا راكب جمل أولى بهذه النبوة من النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>10</sup> ومن أمته. أو ما يستحي أهل الفهم والعلم من أهل الكتاب أن يجعلوا مثل هذه النبوة

<sup>1</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: فاصغري <sup>2</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of

B reads: الماه قصبة البلد، والماهان الدينور ونهاوند، أحدهما ماه الكوفة والآخر ماه البصرة، من

<sup>3</sup>B: ذهباً <sup>4</sup>Thus corrected in C and D; A and B appear to read: والقادة <sup>5</sup>C and D: القاموس

صلعم <sup>10</sup>B: فهذا <sup>9</sup>B: فينما <sup>8</sup>C and D: (wrongly). ليلاً ونهاراً <sup>7</sup>C and D: ترى <sup>6</sup>A and B: لتخبر

the unjust acts unjustly and the plunderer plunders. So rise, mountains of Elam and mountains of Māhīn, for all that you contended and disputed over has been brought to nothing. And because of this, convulsions have stricken my back and I am encompassed about, just like a woman in confinement. I am frightened so I cannot hear, and dismayed so I cannot see; my heart races and dizziness has distracted me. What I cherished as familiar and tender has become cheerless to me and an appalling thing. So then, prepare the tables and lift up your eyes, you guards and spies, eat and drink. Let the leading chiefs rise up to their shields, and let them smear them with oil. For the Lord has spoken to me thus: “Go and set the guard on the watchtower, for him to report | what he sees.” And what he has seen is two riders, one of them riding on an ass and the other riding on a camel, and he has heard much long talk. The keeper of the watchtower told me in secret and spoke to me in my ear, “I am the everlasting Lord, and I am in the lookout and the high watching place day and night. While I was in this station, one of the riders drew near, and he was saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon, and all her carved divinities are shattered on the ground.” This that I have heard from the great Lord God of Israel I announce to you.”<sup>241</sup>

42r

This also is a clear, plain prophecy that only someone who deceived himself and spurned his good sense would reject. For just as no reasonable person when he speaks will demonstrate recklessness or ignorance and say that there has been in the world a rider on an ass more conforming to this prophecy than Christ (peace be upon him), then in the same way no godly or sensible person can say that there has been in the world a rider on a camel more conforming to this prophecy than the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and his community.<sup>242</sup> For are not the people of understanding and knowledge among the People of the Book ashamed to attribute such a

<sup>241</sup> Isaiah 21:1–10.

<sup>242</sup> Interpretations of Isaiah 21:7 were well-known among Muslims from an early date. They feature in the debate between the Patriarch Timothy I and the Caliph al-Mahdi from the year 782/3 (A. Mingana, “The apology of Timothy the Patriarch before the Caliph Mahdī,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 12 (1928) 137–298, pp. 173–175) and in the *Risāla* of Ibn al-Layth (pp. 176 text/75 trans.) from about 796, though the latter refers to two riders on camels.

الواضحة الجلييلة<sup>1</sup> لقوم أجلاف جفاة؟ ولقد شرح إشعيا النبي ذلك ولم يدعهم في عمى وفتح منهم الآذان الصمّاء فقال: "إنّ هكذا يقول الربّ إنك ستأتي من جهة التيمّن"، ثمّ فسر ذلك فقال: "من بلد بعيد ومن أرض البادية" لئلا يدع لمحتجّ حجة. ثمّ زاد إلى ذلك فقال: "هوّت هوّت آلهة بابل وتكسّرت". ولم يزل في إقليم بابل ملوك<sup>2</sup> يعبدون الأوثان مرّة ثمّ النيران بأخرى،<sup>3</sup> حتى ظهر النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>4</sup> فاصطلم عزّهم وهدم بيوت أوثانهم ونيرانهم وأدخلهم في الدين طوعاً وكرهاً. أو لم يستحيوا أن يقولوا إنّ الأنبياء المهديين من آل إسحق عليهم السلام تنبأوا على ملوك بابل وماهين وفارس والخور، وأضربوا عن ذكر مثل هذا النبيّ الجليل والأمة الإبراهيمية العظيمة والدولة المنصورة، وإنّ الله سترها عنهم أو كرها منهم. فأما قوله: "رأيت ظالماً يظلم"، فإنّما<sup>5</sup> يعني به فارس والخور والنبط الذين ذكرهم وقال لهم: "ارجعوا خائبين وتحوّ مدحورين مسلوبين إلى بلدانكم".

42v

وقال في هذا الفصل: "إنّكم ستبيتون مساءً في الغيضة التي على طريق دورنيم. فتلقوا العطاش بالماء يأسكّن التيمّن واستقبلوا بالأطعمة القوم المبدّدين المفرقين لأنّ السيف بدّدهم، ومن خوف الشفار المشحودة والقسى الموترة والحرب العوان المستعرة كان تشردهم". فنّ هؤلاء العطاش الذين أقبلوا من جهة التيمّن الذين أمر الله عزّ وجلّ أهل بلدانهم بتلقّيهم؟ أو من هؤلاء الذين أجلتهم الحروب أو شرّدت بهم؟ ومن الذين أمر الله باستقبالهم بالمياه والمطاعم غير العرب عند نهوضها لمحاربة الأمم المحيطة بهم الحائلة بينهم وبين المرعى والماء ومن الفرس والروم وغيرهم؟

<sup>1</sup>B: الجلييلة الواضحة <sup>2</sup>B omits this word. <sup>3</sup>A: بأخرة; B: أخرى; C and D: آخره <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>6</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر نحو هذا في

الأصحاح الحادي والعشرين، وفيه التصريح بلفظ العرب

direct and impressive prophecy to rude, harsh people? The prophet Isaiah has explained this and has not left them in blindness, and he has opened their deaf ears by saying, 'Thus says the Lord: You will come from the south.' Then he interprets this and says, 'From a distant land and from a land of desert', so as not to leave any pretext to one who looks for it. And then he adds to this by saying, 'Fallen, fallen are the deities of Babylon, and they are broken up.' And in the region of Babylon there were always kings who worshiped idols at one time then fires at another, until the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) appeared and ended their power, | and destroyed the housings of their idols and fires, and brought them into the faith willy-nilly. And are they not ashamed to say that the prophets from the family of Isaac who were given guidance (peace be upon them) prophesied about the kings of Babylon, Māhīn, Persia and Khuzistān, but omitted to mention such a great prophet as this, and the mighty community of Abraham and the victorious empire, or that God would conceal them from them or make them hateful to them?<sup>243</sup> Concerning his words, 'I have seen the plunderer plundering', by them he means Persia, Khuzistān and the Nabateans, whom he mentions and says to them, 'Return to your homelands disappointed, and withdraw defeated and denied.'<sup>244</sup>

42v

And he says in this chapter, 'In the evening you will lodge in the thicket which is on the way to Dūranīm. Dwellers in the south, meet the thirsty with water and welcome the scattered and dispersed people with food. For the sword has scattered them, and it was through fear of the whetted blade, taut bows and endless, blazing war that they have been panicked.'<sup>245</sup> Now, who are these thirsty people who came from the south, whom God, great and mighty, has commanded the people of their countries to meet, or who are they whom wars have driven away and panicked, and who are these whom God has commanded to be met with water and food other than the Arabs at their rising to fight against the nations that surrounded them, the Persians, Romans and others, who stood between them and grazing land and water?

<sup>243</sup> Here 'Alī makes the point that is implicit in his whole discussion of the Old Testament books, that the prophets of Israel, who would be among the descendants of Isaac, prophesied about Muḥammad as much as they prophesied about other rulers and leaders who were to come, and that Jews and Christians should not deny this when they accept all the references made in their scriptures about these other individuals.

<sup>244</sup> Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 97, n. 2, says that this sentence is misplaced, but while its interpretation is not obvious, it clearly refers to verse 2 in the passage above that 'Alī is explaining.

<sup>245</sup> Isaiah 21:13–15.

وقال في الفصل الحادي عشر: <sup>1</sup> «إنا سمعنا من أطراف الأرض مزموراً وترتيلًا للبر والخير وهو يقول: «إنا لي سرًّا، إنا لي سرًّا، ويقول: «يا ويحي، فجر الفجار، فجر الفجار فجوراً فهذا | محقق بكم يا سكان الأرض الرعب والمهواة والفخ، فمن 43r نجا من الحرب وقع في المهواة، ومن صعد من المهواة اشتمل عليه الفخ لأن أبواب السماء تفتحت وتزعزت أساسات الأرض وارتاعت». فهذا في تفسير مارقوس، فأما في العبراني الذي هو <sup>2</sup> الأصل فإنه يقول: «إنا سمعنا من أطراف الأرض صوت محمد». ومكة هي <sup>3</sup> في أطراف الأرض وعلى ساحل البحر، فليعلمونا متى وفي أي دهر نزل بأهل الإشراك والكفر من الروعات والنقم والنجات مثل ما عمهم ونزل بهم في هذه الدولة.

وقال في الفصل السادس عشر <sup>4</sup> مفسراً لما تقدم في النبوات ومبكِّكاً لأهل المحك <sup>5</sup> والغوايات: «لتفرح أهل البادية العطشى ولتبتهج البراري والفلوات، ولتخرج نوراً كنور الشسلند ولتستن <sup>6</sup> وتزهو <sup>7</sup> مثل الوعل لأنها ستعطى بأحمد محاسن لبنان وكمثل حسن الدساكر والرياض، وسترون <sup>8</sup> جلال الله عز وجل وبهاء إلها». أما ترون—يهديكم الله—ماذا كشف لكم النبي عليه السلام ونطق به الوحي من ذكر البوادي والقفار، وما بشرها الله تعالى به من الجدة والنصرة والكرامات المعدة لها بأحمد عليه السلام؟ فهل يختلج شك بعد التسمية ووصف البادية المعطشة؟

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر نحو هذا في الأصحاح الرابع. <sup>2</sup>B: فهو. <sup>3</sup>B, C and D omit this word. <sup>4</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر نحو هذا [في] الأصحاح الخامس والثلاثين. <sup>5</sup>B: الحل (?). <sup>6</sup>C and D: wrongly). <sup>7</sup>C and D: وتزهو. <sup>8</sup>C and D: وسيرون (?). <sup>9</sup>ولتستن.



In Chapter 11 he says, ‘We have heard from the ends of the earth psalming and chanting to the godly and good, saying, “I have a secret. I have a secret”, and saying, “Woe is me, the shameless have acted without shame, the shameless have acted brazenly without shame.” Thus I myself, | O dwellers in the earth, 43r will surround you with alarm, pit and snare. The one who escapes from the battle will fall into the pit, the one who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare. For the doors of heaven are open and the foundations of the earth tremble and are fearful.’<sup>246</sup> This is in the interpretation of Marcus, though in the Hebrew, which is the original, it says, ‘We have heard from the ends of the earth the strain “Muḥammad”’. And Mecca is at the ends of the earth and on the edge of the sea. So let them tell us when and at what time such alarms, affliction and disasters have befallen the polytheists and unbelievers as have prevailed among them and befallen them under this empire.

In Chapter 16, in interpretation of what is in the prophecies earlier and in blame of the disputatious and misguided, he says, ‘Let the people of the dry desert rejoice, let the deserts and arid spaces be glad, let them bring forth blossom like the crocus, let them rejoice and thrive like the mountain goat, because they will be given by Aḥmad the beauties of Lebanon, and similar to the loveliness of villages and meadows. And they shall see the greatness of God, great and mighty, and the splendour of our God.’<sup>247</sup> Can you not see, may God guide you, what the prophet (peace be upon him) has shown to you, and the revelation he has uttered in the mention of deserts and waters, and what God almighty has testified to in the newness, the freshness and the honours intended for them by Aḥmad (peace be upon him)? Can there be any stirring of doubt after the mention of the name, and the description of the dry desert?

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<sup>246</sup> Isaiah 24:16–18.

<sup>247</sup> Isaiah 35:1–2.

وقال في الفصل التاسع عشر<sup>1</sup> فزاد إبانة وإيضاحاً: "هتف هاتف في البدو<sup>2</sup>  
وقال خلّوا الطريق للرّب، وسهّلوا لإلهنا السبيل في القفر، فستمتلئ الأودية  
كلّها مياهاً وتفيض فيضاً، وتخفّض الجبال والروابي انخفاضاً وتصير الآكام  
43v دكداً والأرض الوعرة مذلّة ملساء، وتظهر كرامة الرّب ويراه كلّ أحد  
من أجل أنّ الرّب يقول ذلك". فهل تعرفون—يهديكم الله—أمة دعاها الله من  
البدو والقفار، وسهّل لها الوعرة، وأخصب الجنب، وأمرع الجدوب، وأترع  
لعطاشهم الأودية إترعاً، وأذلّ لها<sup>3</sup> الجبابة والأملاك الذين شبّههم بالروابي  
والجبال إلّا هذه الأمة التي صارت دجلة بين أيديهم كالشراك المذلّل؟ فإنّهم لما  
انتهوا إليها قالوا بأجمعهم: إنّ الذي حفظنا في البرّ هو الذي يحفظنا في البحر". ثمّ  
خاضوها خوفاً ووراءها كسرى ومرازبته وأجناده، فلم يحفلوا به ولا نكلوا عنه  
وهم عراة حفاة<sup>4</sup> إنّما يوقون رؤوسهم بالأنساع.

وقال في هذا الفصل: "إنّ الرّب الإله سيظهر بالعزّ وذراعه بالحول والقوة،<sup>5</sup> أجره  
معه وعمله أمامه، فهو<sup>6</sup> كالراعي الذي يرعى قطيعه ويجمع غنمه بذراعه، ويحملهم  
في حجره ويغذو<sup>7</sup> الرّواضع منهم بنفسه. وقد بيّنا فيما مضى وفي كتابي الذي في  
الردّ على أصناف النصارى أنّ اسم "الله" واسم "الرّب"<sup>8</sup> واقعان على الناس أيضاً،  
ومصداق ذلك في هذه النبوّة، فقد أخبر أنّ "الرّب الإله" هو إنسان أجره معه  
وعمله أمامه. وإنّما عني به النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم.<sup>9</sup> فهو الذي كان أجره معه،  
وهو الذي عجل للمجاهدين في سبيل الله نوافله وفضله بالعزّ والغلبة اللذين كانا  
44r معه. | وقوله: "إنّه كالراعي الذي يرعى قطيعه"، فإنّه شبّه ذلك برأفة النبيّ صلّى

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح الأربعين: <sup>2</sup>B:

بالقوة والحول: <sup>3</sup>B: النهار <sup>4</sup>B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B: <sup>6</sup>This word is added in the margin in A;

صلعم: <sup>9</sup>B: اسم الرّب واسم الإله: <sup>8</sup>B: ويغذي <sup>7</sup>B: it is lacking in B, C and D.

In Chapter 19, adding explanation and clarification, he says, 'In the desert a voice cried and said, "Make clear the way for the Lord and make straight the path in the desert for our God; every valley shall be filled with water and they will overflow; | the mountains and hills shall be made low; the rises shall become flat, and the rough ground made low and smooth, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and every one shall see him, for the Lord has said this."<sup>248</sup> Do you know, may God guide you, a community which God has summoned from the desert and arid spaces, for whom he has made level what is rough, made fertile the wild tract, made pasture from barren land, filled the valleys for their thirsty ones, to which he has humbled tyrants and kings, whom he compares with rises and hills, other than this community, before whom the Tigris became like a smoothed out pathway? For when they reached it, they all said, 'He who has protected us on dry land will protect us on the sea.' Then they plunged through it, with Chosroes and his satraps and armies beyond it, though they regarded him as nothing and did not fall back before him, when they were naked and barefoot, with only the reins from their camels to protect their heads.<sup>249</sup>

43v

In this chapter he says, 'The Lord God will appear in power, and his arm with might and strength. His recompense is with him and his deed before him, for he is like the shepherd who tends his flock and gathers his sheep with his arm, carrying them in his lap and feeding their young himself.'<sup>250</sup> We have already shown above and in my book on *The Refutation of the groups of Christians* that the term 'God' and the term 'Lord' can both apply to humans as well.<sup>251</sup> The substantiation of this is in this prophecy, for he declares that the 'Lord God' is a man whose recompense is with him and his deed is before him. He means by this the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), for it is he who had his recompense with him, and he who paid out to those who fought in the way of God his spoils and favour through the power and victory that he possessed. | His words, 'He is like a shepherd who tends his flock', can be compared with the Prophet's compassion and tenderness (may God bless him and give him

44r

<sup>248</sup> Isaiah 40:3–5.

<sup>249</sup> 'Alī's chronology here raises some difficulties. He imagines an invasion across the Tigris by poorly armed fervent Muslim believers during Muḥammad's lifetime, and before 628 when Chosroes II died. But no such crossing is known until the late 630s at the earliest.

<sup>250</sup> Isaiah 40:10–11.

<sup>251</sup> This evidently refers to the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā*, and to the argument near the end of the surviving text. See pp. 152–155, and also pp. 342–343 above.

الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> وتحنّنه على أهل دينه، فإنّ الله عزّ وجلّ يقول فيه صلّى الله عليه وسلم: <sup>2</sup>﴿لقد جاءكم رسول من أنفسكم عزيز عليه ما عنتم<sup>3</sup> حريص عليكم بالمؤمنين رؤوف رحيم﴾. وقال عزّ وجلّ لموسى عليه السلام: "إني جاعلك إلهاً<sup>4</sup> لفرعون". وقال في التوراة: "إنّ أبناء الله عزّ وجلّ نظروا إلى بنات الناس ورأوهنّ روقة حسناً فاتخذوهنّ". وقال داوود النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلم: <sup>5</sup>"قال الربّ لربيّ". ففي هذا تبيان أنّ اسمي<sup>6</sup> "الإله" و"الربّ" كانا يقعان على الإنسان.

وقال أشعيا عليه السلام في هذا الفصل: <sup>7</sup>"من ذا الذي نبّه البرّ من المشرق ودعاه إلى موطن قدمه ليسلم إليه الأمم ويذهل منه الملوك ويجعل سيوفه في عدد الثرى والبرى وقسيّه في عدد الحزم المنثورة، فهو يغلبهم ويضرب وجوههم ثمّ يحدث سلماً ولا يظأ برجله سفيراً". وهذا شبيه بما قال الله عزّ وجلّ في القرآن. فأما قوله: "من ذا الذي نبّه البرّ من المشرق"، فإنّ أرض الحجاز والعراق وما والاها عند أهل الشام مشرق، والشام عند أهل برقة وأفريقية مشرق، وأرض اليمن والحجاز عند الحكماء من التيمن. والمدعو إلى موطن قدم " خليل الله" هو النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>8</sup> وإليه أسلم الله الأمم، وبه وبّخ الملوك فذهلوا، وهو الذي لا تعدّ رماته وسيفوه، وبه ضرب الله وجوه الأمم وخذلهم وأذلّهم، ثمّ أعقبهم بالإيمان والإسلام<sup>9</sup> والسلم كما قال الله عزّ وجلّ على لسان أشعيا النبيّ عليه السلام.

44v

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>A and B: عندتم (cf. Q 9:128). <sup>4</sup>This word is lacking in B, which has a

blank space here. <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>Thus corrected in C and D; A and B: اسم <sup>7</sup>A note written in

the same hand in the margin of B reads: <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح الحادي والأربعين

الإسلام والإيمان

peace) towards the people of his religion. For God, great and mighty, says about him (may God bless him and give him peace), ‘There hath come unto you a messenger, (one) of yourselves, unto whom aught that ye are overburdened is grievous, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, merciful.’<sup>252</sup> And he, great and mighty, says to Moses (peace be upon him), ‘I will make you a god to Pharaoh,’<sup>253</sup> and in the Torah he says, ‘The sons of God, great and mighty, looked upon the daughters of men, and saw that they were beautiful and lovely, and they took them for themselves.’<sup>254</sup> And the prophet David (may God bless him and give him peace) says, ‘The Lord said to my lord.’<sup>255</sup> So here there is clear proof that the terms ‘God’ and ‘Lord’ have been applied to human beings.

Isaiah (peace be upon him) says in this chapter, ‘Who has stirred up the pious one from the east and called him to his footstool in order to give him the nations, to dismay kings through him, and to make his swords as numerous as earth and dust, and his bows as numerous as scattered sheaves? For he will defeat them and strike their faces, and then he will establish peace and will not set his foot on a journey.’<sup>256</sup> This resembles what God, great and mighty, says in the Qur’ān. And concerning his words, ‘Who has stirred up the pious one from the east?’, the land of the Ḥijāz and Iraq and their surroundings are the east for the people of Syria, and Syria for the people of Barqa<sup>257</sup> and Ifrīqiya is the east, and the land of Yemen and the Ḥijāz for scholars is the south. The one who is called to the footstool of the ‘friend of God’ is the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and to him God gave the nations, through him he censured kings so that they were dismayed, he | it is whose archers and swordsmen cannot be counted. By him God struck the faces of the nations, abandoned and subdued them, and then afterwards he gave them faith, Islam, and peace, as God, great and mighty, said on the tongue of the prophet Isaiah (peace be upon him).

44v

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<sup>252</sup> Q 9:128.

<sup>253</sup> Exodus 7:1.

<sup>254</sup> Genesis 6:2.

<sup>255</sup> Psalm 110:1.

<sup>256</sup> Isaiah 41:2–4.

<sup>257</sup> In the eastern part of present day Libya.

وقال في الفصل العشرين: <sup>1</sup> "يا آل إبراهيم خليلي الذي قويتك، دعوتك من أقاصي الأرض ومن نجودها وعواليها، ناديتك وقلت لك: إنك عبيدي وأنا اجتبيتك ولم أستر ذلك، فلا تخفْ لأني معك ولا ترهب فيها أنا إلهك، أيديتك ثم أعتك وبميني <sup>2</sup> العريضة البرّة مهّدت لك، ولذلك يبهت ويخزي المستطيّلون عليك ويضمحل ويتلاشى <sup>3</sup> الذين يمارونك ويشاقونك، ويبيد القوم المنازعون لك، تطلبهم فلا تحسّ منهم أثراً لأنهم يبطلون ويصبحون كالنسيء المنسيء أمامك، لأني أنا الربّ قويت يمينك. قلت لك لا تخفْ فإنني <sup>4</sup> أنا عونك، ومخلّصك هو قدّوس إسرائيل يقول الله الربّ. أنا جعلتك مثل الجرجر الحديد الذي يدقّ ما يأتي عليه دقاً ويسحقه سحقاً، وكذلك تفعل أنت أيضاً، تدوس الجبال وتدقّها دقاً وتجعل المدائن والتلال هشيماً تذروه العواصف وتلوي به هوج الرياح، وتبتهج أنت حينئذ وترتاح بالربّ وتكون محمّداً بقدّوس إسرائيل". فهذه نبوة ناطقة وقول فصيح غير أعجم ومعرب غير طمطم، والمخاطب به من آل إبراهيم، ولد <sup>5</sup> إسماعيل <sup>6</sup> المشبّين بالحجر المدقّ والحديد المسحق الذي يدقّ الجبال باسم إله محمّد الذي سمّاه وقال إنّه يكون محمّداً بالله جلّ وعزّ. فقد وضّح اليقين وانكشف الغطاء، وإن شغب شاغب فأكثر ما يمكنه أن يقول إنّ تفسير اللفظة السريانية هو أن يكون محمّداً وليس بمحمّد، ومن عرف اللغة وفهم نحوها لم يخالفنا في أن معنى محمّد ومحمود شيء واحد.

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح الحادي والأربعين.

<sup>2</sup>B: بيمينى <sup>3</sup>Thus corrected in C and D; A and B: وتضمحل ويتلاشى <sup>4</sup>B: لأني <sup>5</sup>C and D: وولد

<sup>6</sup>B: من آل إسماعيل ولد إبراهيم

He says in Chapter 20, 'People of Abraham my friend, whom I have strengthened, I have called you from the ends of the earth and from its uplands and high places. I have called out to you and told you that you are my servants; I have chosen you and I have not concealed this. So do not fear, because I am with you; and do not be afraid, for here I am your God. I supported you, and then I helped you, and by my strong and holy right arm I cleared obstacles from you. And because of this the presumptuous slander and dishonour you, and those who fight against you and struggle with you shall fade away and vanish, and the people who contend against you will perish. You will seek them but you will find no trace of them, because they will be destroyed and will become utterly forgotten before you. For I the Lord have strengthened your right hand. I have said to you: Do not fear, for I am your help, and your saviour is the holy One of Israel, says God the Lord. I have made you like the iron threshers which crushes everything on which it is brought and turns it completely into powder. You too will do the same, you will trample the mountains underfoot and crush them, and you will make the towns and hills into chaff which the gales will blow away and the turbulence of the winds will whirl off. You will be gladdened at that time, and you will be happy in the Lord, and you will be praised [*Muḥammad*] in the holy One of Israel.'<sup>258</sup> This is a distinct prophecy, eloquent words without obscurities, put into Arabic without barbarisms. The one spoken about is from the family of Abraham, the descendants of Ishmael, who are likened to the stone that pounds and the iron that pulverises, which pounds the mountains in the name of the God of Muḥammad, | whom he names and says he will be Muḥammad through God great and mighty. Certainty is made clear and the covering has been removed, and if a troublemaker should be troublesome, the most he will be able to say is that the interpretation of the Syriac word is that it is *maḥmūd* and not Muḥammad, though anyone who understands language and comprehends its grammar will never disagree with us that the meanings of *maḥmūd* and Muḥammad are one.

45r

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<sup>258</sup> Isaiah 41:8–16.

وقال<sup>1</sup> في هذا الفصل: <sup>2</sup> "إِنَّ الْمَسَاكِينَ وَالضُّعْفَاءَ يَسْتَسْقُونَ مَاءً وَلَا مَاءَ لَهُمْ، فَقَدْ جَفَّتْ أَسْنَتُهُمْ مِنَ الظَّمَاءِ. وَأَنَا الرَّبُّ أُجِيبُ حِينَئِذٍ دَعْوَتَهُمْ وَلَنْ أَهْمِلَهُمْ بَلْ أَجْزِي لَهُمْ فِي الْجِبَالِ الْأَنْهَارَ، وَأَجْزِي بَيْنَ<sup>3</sup> الْقَفَارِ الْعَيُونَ، وَأُحْدِثُ فِي الْبَدْوِ آجَامًا، وَأَجْزِي فِي الْأَرْضِ الْعَطْشَى مَاءً مَعِينًا، وَأُنْبِتُ فِي الْقَفَارِ الْبَلَاقِعَ الصَّنَوْبِرَ وَالْآسَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ، وَأَغْرِسُ فِي الْقَاعِ الصَّفْصَفَ السَّيْءَ الْبَهِيَّةَ لِيَرْوَهَا جَمِيعًا وَيَعْلَمُوا وَيَتَذَكَّرُوا ثُمَّ يَفْهَمُوا مَعًا أَنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ فَعَلَتْ ذَلِكَ وَقَدْ دُوسَ إِسْرَائِيلَ ابْتَدَعَهُ". فَأَيْنَ لَكُمْ يَا بَنِي عَمِّي الْمُحِيدَ عَنْ هَذِهِ النَّبُوَّةِ الْوَاضِحَةِ النَّاطِقَةِ، وَمَا عَسَيْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ فِيهَا، وَقَدْ سَمِيَ الْبِلَادُ وَوَصَفَ الْمَعَاطِشُ وَالْقَفَارُ وَالْبَلَاقِعُ وَمَا جُفِّرَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْعَيُونَ، وَأَجْرَى مِنَ الْأَنْهَارِ وَغَرَسَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَنْوَاعِ الْأَشْجَارِ، وَسَمِيَ الْعَطَاشُ الْمَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبُوَادِي وَالْحِجَازِ، وَأَخْبَرَ أَنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَعَلَتْ ذَلِكَ. فَلَيْسَ لِمَنْ دَفَعَ هَذِهِ النَّبُوَّةَ وَأَنْكَرَهَا مِنْ دِينٍ وَلَا حَيَاءٍ وَلَا خَلَقٍ. فَقَدْ سَمِيَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي النَّبُوَّةِ الَّتِي قَبْلَهَا. فَإِذَا بَقِيَ يَا أَيُّهَا الشَّاكُّونَ، وَمَا الْعُذْرُ الْمَقْبُولُ الْمُنْجِي لِمَنْ تَصَامَمَ<sup>4</sup> وَتَعَامَى عَنْهَا؟

45v وقال في الفصل الحادي والعشرين: <sup>5</sup> "لَتَسْبَحَنِي وَتُحَمِّدَنِي حَيَوَانَاتُ الْبَرِّ مِنْ بَنَاتِ أَوَى حَتَّى النَّعَامِ،<sup>6</sup> لِأَنِّي أَظْهَرْتُ الْمَاءَ فِي الْبَدْوِ، وَأَجْرَيْتُ الْأَنْهَارَ فِي بِلَادِ أَشِيمُونَ لَتَشْرَبَ مِنْهَا أُمَّتِي الْمَصْطَفَاةُ. فَلَتَشْرَبَ مِنْهُ أُمَّتِي الَّتِي اصْطَفَيْتَهَا". فَمَنْ كَانَ شَاكًّا فِيمَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنَ النَّبَوَاتِ فَلَا عُذْرَ لَهُ إِنْ جَهِلَ أَوْ تَجَاهَلَ أَنَّ النَّعَامَ لَا تَكُونُ إِلَّا بِالْبَادِيَةِ، وَإِنَّمَا ذَكَرَ الثَّعَالِبَ وَالنَّعَامَ مَثَلًا ضَرْبَهُ لِسَكَّانِ الْبُوَادِي وَالْفَلَوَاتِ، فَمَنْ مَحَكَّ فِيهِ وَحَاوَلَ تَلْبِيسَهُ فَقَدْ هَلَكَ.

أيضًا في الأصحاح الحادي <sup>2A</sup> note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: قال <sup>1B</sup>

ذكر: <sup>5A</sup> note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: تصامم: <sup>4B</sup> من: <sup>3B</sup>. والأربعين

النعم: <sup>6B</sup>. هذا في الأصحاح الثالث والأربعين



In this Chapter he says, 'The poor and weak beg for water but there is no water for them, and their tongues have become dry with thirst. I the Lord will answer their call on that day; I will not neglect them, but I will break out rivers from the mountains for them, and cause springs to flow through the deserts; I will bring forth pools in the deserts, and cause spring water to flow in the dry earth; in the desert waste I will make the pine, the myrtle and the olive grow, and in the arid waste I will plant the handsome cypress. Thus, they may all see this, know and consider and then understand together that the hand of God has done this, and the holy One of Israel has devised it.'<sup>259</sup> My cousins, where will you find an escape from this clear, direct prophecy, and what can you aptly say about it, when he has named the lands and described the parched lands, deserts and wastes, the springs he has caused to gush, the rivers he has caused to flow, and the kinds of trees he has planted there? He has named the poor thirsty dwellers of the people of the deserts and the Ḥijāz, and announced that the hand of God, great and mighty, has done this. Anyone who can reject and deny this prophecy is without belief, shame or worth. He has even named the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) in the prophecy that comes before this. So, you who doubt, what can remain, and what reasonable, reliable excuse can be left to someone who deafens and blinds himself to it?

In Chapter 21 he says, 'Let the beasts of the desert from jackals to ostriches exalt and praise me, because I have made water appear in the dry land and made rivers flow in the country of Ashīmūn so that my chosen community may drink from them. So let my community which I have chosen drink from them.'<sup>260</sup> Anyone who doubted the preceding prophecies has no excuse about not knowing or pretending not to know that ostriches are only found in dry lands. And he only mentions foxes and ostriches as a metaphor which he strikes for the dwellers in deserts and waterless tracts. Anyone who quibbles over this and looks for ways to obscure it is lost.

45v

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<sup>259</sup> Isaiah 41:17–20.

<sup>260</sup> Isaiah 43:20–21.

وقال<sup>1</sup> في الفصل الثاني والعشرين<sup>2</sup> عن الله عزّ وجلّ: "أنا الربّ ولا إله غيري، أنا الذي لا يخفى عليه خافية، أنا أخبر العباد بما لم يكن قبل أن يكون، وأكشف لهم الحوادث والغيوب، وأتمّ مشيئتي كلّها فأدعو من البدو طائراً ومن البلد البعيد الشاسع". هو النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم، وهو الذي ارتضاه الله<sup>3</sup> لاجتهاده فيما أرضاه وأحبّه. وإن لجوّاء وتشاغبوا، فليعلمونا أين هذا البدو والفلوات التي وصفها الله عزّ وجلّ ومن ذا الذي دعاه فعمل بمرضاته.

وقال في الفصل الثالث والعشرين<sup>4</sup> يخاطب الناس عن النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>5</sup>: "اسمعي آيتي الجزائر وتفهمي يا آيتي الأمم. إنّ الربّ أهاب بي من بعيد وذكر اسمي وأنا في الرحم، وجعل لساني كالسيف الصارم وأنا في البطن، وحاطني بظلّ يمينه وجعلني في مكانته كالسهم المختار، وخزني لسره<sup>6</sup> | وقال لي إنك عهدي، فصرفي وعدلي قدّام الربّ حقّاً، وأعمالي بين يدي إلهي، وصرت محمّداً عند الربّ وبإلهي حولي وقوتي". فإن أنكر منكر اسم محمّد في هذا الباب فليكن محمّداً، فلن يجد إلى غير ذلك من الدعاوي سبيلاً، وهو الذي جعل الله لسانه كالسيف، وهو العربيّ المبين الذي خبّاه في مكانته لسره وتدييره الذي قد أظهره، وهو الذي يقول في أمّته صباح مساء: "لا حول ولا قوة إلاّ بالله".

وقال في الفصل السادس والعشرين<sup>7</sup> ما يزيد نبوّاته<sup>8</sup> المتقدّمة إنارة وتأكيّداً وتمهيداً، وخاطب بها هاجر عليها السلام: "سبحي آيتي النزور الرقوب، واغتبطي

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في

الأصحاح ٢٦. <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>C: بحوا; D: بحثوا (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>C: عر (wrongly). <sup>6</sup>A note

written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح ٤٩. <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم. <sup>8</sup>A note

written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح ٥٤. <sup>9</sup>C and D: بنبواته.

In Chapter 22 he says from God, great and mighty, 'I am the lord and there is no god other than me. I am the one from whom there is nothing hidden. I declare to humans what was not before it is, and I reveal to them what happens and what is hidden, and I bring to fulfilment all my will. I call a bird from the desert and from the remote distant land.'<sup>261</sup> This is the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and he is the one with whom God was pleased because of his striving in what he consented to and desired. If they persist and cause problems, then let them inform us where this desert and waterless tracts are which God, great and mighty, has described, and who it was he called and carried out his desires.

In Chapter 23, telling people about the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), he says, 'Listen to me, islands, and understand me, nations. The Lord has summoned me from afar; he declared my name when I was in the womb, and made my tongue like a sharp sword before I was born; he placed over me the shadow of his right hand, and put me in his quiver like a chosen arrow; he has treasured me for his secret, | and said to me: You are my servant. So, my energy and integrity are before the Lord in truth; my actions are before my God, and I have become greatly praised [*Muḥammad*] before the Lord, and with my God are my strength and my power.'<sup>262</sup> If anyone should deny the name 'Muḥammad' in this instance, then let it be 'Maḥmūd', and he will not find a means for any objection other than this. He is the one whose tongue God made like a sword, and he is the evident Arabian whom he had concealed in his quiver for his secret, and his design which he made known. And he is the one who says through his community morning and evening, 'There is no strength or power except through God.'

46r

What he says in Chapter 26 adds illumination, confirmation and facilitation to the preceding prophecies. He said to Hagar (peace be upon her) about it, 'Sing praise, childless one who wait in hope, and rejoice at *ḥamd*, barren one.

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<sup>261</sup> Isaiah 46:9–11.

<sup>262</sup> Isaiah 49:1–5.

بالحمد آيتّها العاقر، فقد زاد وُلد الفارغة المجفّية على وُلد المشغولة الحظية، وقال لها الربّ: "أوسعي مواضع خيامك ومدّي ستور مضاربك. لا تنفسي ولا تضني، بل طوّلي أطنابك واستوثقي من أوتادك، من أجل أنك تبتسطين وتنشرين في الأرض يميناً وشمالاً، وترث ذريّتك الأمم ويسكنون القرى المعطّلة اليباب". فليت شعري ما عساهم يقولون في هذه وقد ذكر الله عزّ وجلّ<sup>1</sup> سارة وهاجر جميعاً عليهما السلام، ووصف عليه السلام خيام وُلد هاجر. فإلى من تُضاف هذه، وبمن تليق إلا بولد هاجر وذريّتها؟ أو لمن الخيام والطنب إلا لولدها؟ لعلكم تقولون إنّه عنى بهذا الحبشان والترك فإنهم أيضاً أصحاب عمد وخيّام. وإنّ من تعامى عن هذه وما قبلها لعمى<sup>2</sup> قليل النظر لنفسه، مجاهر بمعصية ربّه. وما تركهم الله عزّ وجلّ في شبهة، بل كرّر وأظهر وأبان.

46v

وقال أيضاً عن الله عزّ وجلّ في الفصل الثامن والعشرين:<sup>3</sup> "إني أقسمتُ بنفسي وأخرجتُ من في كلمة الحقّ التي لا خلف لها ولا تبديل أنّه تخرّ لي كلّ ركبة، ويقسم بي كلّ لسان ويقولون معاً إنّ النعمة من عند الربّ". فمن هذه الأُمّة التي تقسم باسم الله، ومن ذا الذي يخرّ على الركب لإسم الفرد الواحد، ويحدّث بنعم الله صباحاً ومساءً، ويفرده بالدعاء والإبتال غير هذه الأُمّة؟ فأما جماعة النصارى، فإنهم ينسبون النعم والأفضال إلى المسيح، ويقولون في افتتاح الصلوات على المذابح: "لتتمّ علينا نعم يسوع المسيح".

ذكر هذا: A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: <sup>3</sup>لعمى<sup>2</sup> C and D: <sup>2</sup>عن<sup>1</sup> B adds:

في الأصحاح ٤٥.

For the children of the one who was idle and shunned have become more than the children of the one who was chosen and desired. The Lord said to her: Enlarge the places of your tents, and extend the curtains of your pavilions. Do not be sparing, and do not be concerned, but lengthen your tent ropes and make certain of your stakes. For you will spread and extend through the earth south and north, and your seed will inherit the nations and will inhabit the empty, devastated villages.<sup>263</sup> If only I knew what they could possibly say about this, when God, great and mighty, actually mentions Sarah and Hagar both (peace be upon them), and he (peace be upon him) describes the tents of the descendants of Hagar. For to whom can these belong and to whom are they most appropriate other than the descendants and seed of Hagar? Or of whom are the tents and tent ropes other than her descendants? Maybe you will say that he means by this the Ethiopians and the Turks, because they also possess posts | and tents, though whoever blinds himself to this and refuses to accept it through blindness has little insight into himself and makes plain his defiance of his Lord. And God, great and mighty, has not left them in doubt, but has repeated, clarified and explained.

46v

In Chapter 28 he also says from God, great and mighty, 'I have sworn by myself and have uttered from my mouth the word of truth, to which there is no contradiction or change, that every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall swear by me and say together that blessing is from the Lord.'<sup>264</sup> Now, other than this community what is the community that swears by the name of God, and who is this who bows down on the knee before the name of the One, the Only, and speaks of the blessings of God morning and evening, and devotes prayer and supplications to him alone? For the Christian people ascribe blessings and benefits to Christ, and say at the beginning of prayers at the altars, 'The blessings of Jesus Christ be fulfilled on us.'

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263 Isaiah 54:1–4.

264 Isaiah 45:23–24.

وتنبأ أشعيا في هذا الفصل<sup>1</sup> بما كشف به أسرار النبوة المتقدمة، وبكت<sup>2</sup> به أهل العمى والسفاهة، فلم يترك لمغالط حجة ولا لمعانيد مخرجاً، وخاطب أيضاً هاجر فقال: "آيتها المنغمسة المتغلغلة في الهموم التي لم تنل حظوة ولا سلواً، إنني جاعل جرك بلوراً، وموثق أساساتك بالحجر السماجوني، ومزين حيطانك<sup>3</sup> بالحجر اللازورد وأبوابك بحجر البلق، ومزخرف حدود بيتك بالأحجار النفيسة، ويعرفني هناك جميع ولدك ولا ينكرونني،<sup>4</sup> وأعم أبناءك بالسلام وتكونين مزيّنة بالصلاح والبر، فتنتحي عن الأذى والمكاره لأنك آمنة منها<sup>5</sup> فانحرفي عن الإنكسار والإنخزال فلن يقرباك. ومن ابتعث<sup>6</sup> من بين يديّ فأليك يكون قصده<sup>7</sup> وفيك حلوه، وتصيرين وزراً وملجأ لقاطنيك وسكانك". فتدبروا—يهديكُم الله—هذه فإنكم فهمون جدلون، وانظروا لأنفسكم فإنكم عندئذ<sup>8</sup> مسؤولون هل تعرفون المذلة المتغلغلة في الهموم إلا هاجر، وهل تقع هذه المخاطبة إلا عليها وعلى ولدها. فأَيُّ شرف أرفع وأعظم من شهادة الله لهم أنهم جميعاً يعرفونه ولا يجهلونه وأنه يصير بلدهم وزراً وملجأ للناس أي حرماً وأمناً؟ وبنيت مكة بالفسيفساء ونفائس الأحجار وحمل إليها تيجان الملوك. فليسمع مقالي ونصحي من كان ذا أذنين، وليتدبر هذه الشهادات والمقاييس، وليخلو<sup>9</sup> بكتابي هذا وبتكاتب<sup>10</sup> الرد على النصارى، ويسترشد الله ويعمل<sup>11</sup> لنفسه في فكاكها قبل أن يحلّ به هلاكها.

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح الرابع والخمسين

المتقدم ذكره <sup>2</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: ونكت <sup>3</sup>C: خيطانك (wrongly). <sup>4</sup>So in B; A:

ينكرونني <sup>5</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: منه <sup>6</sup>C and D: انبعث <sup>7</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>8</sup>So

وليعمل <sup>11</sup>B: وتكاتب <sup>10</sup>B: وليخل <sup>9</sup>C and D: عتد (?). <sup>12</sup>in A and B; C and D:

In this Chapter Isaiah gives prophecies that disclose the secrets of the preceding prophecy and censure the blind and foolish people, leaving the cheating no pretext, and the headstrong no escape. Again he spoke to Hagar and said, 'You who are plunged and immersed in sorrows, who have never been given favour or consolation, I will make your stone crystal, I will set your foundations in sapphire, I will adorn your walls with lapis lazuli and your gates with variegated marble, and I will embellish the borders of your house with precious gems. In that place all your children will know me and will not deny me. I will give peace among your sons and you shall be adorned in righteousness and piety. Then leave behind offence and calamities, for you are safe from them, turn away from dejection and defeatedness, for they shall not | come near you. And the one who is sent from my presence will be for you, and his purpose shall be for you, and you will be a retreat and a refuge for those who live and dwell within you.'<sup>265</sup> Consider this, may God guide you, since you are good at understanding and at arguing, and see for yourselves, since you are thus responsible, whether you can know the one who is abased and immersed in grief as other than Hagar, and whether these words apply to anyone other than her and her descendants. For what honour is higher and greater than God's testimony to them that they all know him and are not ignorant of him and that he has made their land a retreat and a refuge for people, that is, a sanctuary and a place of safety? And Mecca has been built of mosaic work and precious gems, and kings' crowns have been taken there. Let him who has ears hear my argument and advice, and consider these testimonies and comparisons, and let him apply himself to this book of mine and to the *Book of the Refutation of the Christians*<sup>266</sup> and let him seek guidance from God, and work for the release of his soul before its destruction sets in on him.

47r

<sup>265</sup> Isaiah 54:11–14.

<sup>266</sup> In this second reference to the *Radd 'alā l-Naṣārā* 'Alī suggests that it and the *Kitāb al-dīn wa-l-dawla* form a complementary pair, the earlier work presenting a refutation of Christian constructions of doctrine based on mistaken interpretations of their scripture, and this work providing a comprehensive demonstration of the plausibility and truth of Islam.

وتنبأ في هذا الفصل<sup>1</sup> ونادى وهتف فقال: "يا معشر العطاش توجهوا إلى الماء والورد، ومن ليس له فضة فليذهب ويمتار ويستقي ويأكل ويتزود مجاناً ويأكل<sup>2</sup> من الخمر واللبن بلا فضة ولا ثمن". فهذا من نبوة أشعيا دال<sup>3</sup> على ما أنعم الله به على ولد هاجر من أمة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم،<sup>4</sup> وعلى أنهم صائرون إلى ما وعدهم الله تعالى به في الآخرة من أنهار من نحر ﴿وأنهار من لبن لم يتغير طعمه﴾،<sup>5</sup> وأنهار من نحر لذة للشاربين ﴿﴾، فانظروا في هذه المشاكلة والموافقة التي بين النبوتين جميعاً.

وقال في هذا الفصل<sup>6</sup>: "إني أقتك شاهداً للشعوب، ومدبراً وسلطاناً للأمم،<sup>47v</sup> لتدعو الأمم الذين لم تعرفهم، وتأتيك الأمم الذين لم يعرفوك هرولةً وشداً من أجل الرب إلهك قدوس إسرائيل الذي أحمدك، فاطلبوا ما عند الرب فإذا عرفتموه فاستجيبوا له، وإذا قرب منكم فليرجع الخاطئ عن خطيئته والفاجر عن سبيله، وليرجع إليّ لأرحمه ولينب إلى إلهنا الذي عمت رحمته وفضله". فمن تدبر هذه النبوة وكرّر النظر فيها لم يحتج إلى غيرها، فقد سمى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيها<sup>8</sup> باسمه وقال: "إن الله جعلك محمداً"، فإن أثر المخالف أن يقول ليس بمحمد بل محمود وافقناه فيه لأنّ معناهما معنى واحد. وقد أنته الأمم هرولةً وشداً، وجعله الله مدبراً للأمم وداعياً إلى الله، كما قال أشعيا، وسراجاً منيراً.

وقال في الفصل الثامن والعشرين: "إن الله تعالى نظر فلم ير عدلاً وأنكر ذلك. ورأى أنه ليس أحديعين على الحق. فعجب الرب منه، وبعث وليه فأنقذه بذراعه

<sup>1</sup>A note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح عدد ٥٥. <sup>2</sup>C and

D omit: طعمها <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>B: دالة <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D: ويتزود مجاناً ويأكل

written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: أي في الخامس والخمسين. <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>C and

D omit this word.



In this Chapter he prophesies, calls out and rejoices, saying, 'All you who are thirsty, come to the water and the watering place, and let him who has no silver go and get provisions and ask for drink and consume and provide for himself freely, and consume wine and milk for no silver and no price.'<sup>267</sup> Among the prophecies of Isaiah this is an indication of how God has blessed the descendants of Hagar from the community of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and that they will receive what God almighty has promised them in the hereafter, rivers of wine 'and rivers of milk whereof the flavour changeth not, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkers'.<sup>268</sup> See in this the similarity and agreement that is to be found between the two prophecies together.

He says in this | Chapter, 'I have set you up as a witness to the peoples, and as a ruler and authority to the nations, so that you may call nations which you have not known, and nations which have not known you may come to you hurrying and intent because of the Lord your God, the holy One of Israel, who has made you praised [*aḥmadak*]. So seek what is with the Lord, and if you know him, listen to him, and if he comes near to you, let the sinner abandon his sin and the profligate his way. Let him return to me so that I may have mercy upon him, and let him come back to our God whose mercy and favour are for all.'<sup>269</sup> Whoever considers this prophecy and continues to think about it will have no need for anything else. For here he has named the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) by his name, and said, 'God has made you Muḥammad'. If the opponent prefers to say, 'It is not Muḥammad but *maḥmūd*', we agree with him on this because the meaning of the two is one. And the nations have come to him hurrying and intent, and God has made him a leader to the nations and one who calls to God, as Isaiah says, and a shining lamp.

47v

In Chapter 28 he says, 'God almighty looked and did not see justice and he deplored this. He saw that there was not one upholding the truth. The Lord was amazed at this and sent his friend. He saved him with his arm, and prepared for

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267 Isaiah 55:1.

268 Q 47:15.

269 Isaiah 55:4–7.

ومهد له بفضلته، فاستلأم العفاف والبر<sup>1</sup> كالدرع ووضع على رأسه سنور الإغاثة<sup>2</sup> والفلج، ولبس لباس الخلاص لينتقم من المبغضين له والمعادين، ويجازي أهل الجزائر جزاءهم أجمعين ليتقي اسم الله في مغارب الأرض وليخشع في مشارقها لجلاله". وقد استلأم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>3</sup> البر كالدرع، ووضع على رأسه سنور الإنقاذ والفلج،<sup>4</sup> ولبس لباس الخلاص والإنقاذ من أعداء الله، وجازي<sup>48r</sup> أهل الجزائر، وأظهر اسم الله في مشارق الأرض ومغاربها، وخضع له أهلها. فأين المحيد عنه، وكيف المدفع لهذه النبوات التي قد تظاهرت عليه؟ وأين المهرب من الله لمن<sup>5</sup> عانده وتصام عن وحيه وندائه؟

وتنبأ في هذا الفصل بما لا يردّه إلا الخاسرون، ولا يجمله إلا الأجهلون الأعْمون، فإنه ذكر أيضاً هاجر مخاطباً لها وبلاد ولدها مكة وقال: "قومي وأزهري مصباحك، فقد دنا وقتك وكرامة الله طالعة عليك، فقد تخللت الأرض الظلام، وغطى على الأمم الضباب، فالرب يشرق عليك إشراقاً ويظهر<sup>6</sup> كرامته عليك. وتسير الأمم إلى نورك والملوك إلى ضوء طلوعك. ارفعي بصرك إلى ما حولك وتأملّي، فإنهم سيجتمعون كلهم إليك ويحجونك ويأتوك ولدك من بلد بعيد، وتربى بناتك على الأرائك والسرر،<sup>7</sup> ويستروح قلبك من أجل أنه يميل إليك البحر، ويحج<sup>8</sup> إليك عساكر الأمم حتى تغمرك الأبل المربلة، وتضيق أرضك عن القطرات التي تجتمع إليك، ويساق إليك كباش مدين وكباش أعفا وتأتيك أهل سبأ ويحدثون بنعم الله ويمجدونه، وتسير إليك أغنام قيذار كلها وتخدمك رخالات<sup>9</sup> نبأوت ويرفع إلى مذبحي ما يرضيني وأحدث حينئذ لبيت محمدتي حمداً". فهذه أيضاً—

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D: الإغاثة <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>A and B: والفلج <sup>5</sup>B omits the following words: لهذه النبوات التي قد تظاهرت عليه وأين المهرب <sup>6</sup>C and D: وتظهر <sup>7</sup>B omits this word. <sup>8</sup>C and D: وتنج <sup>9</sup>A and B: رجالات

him his favour. He put on modesty and piety as a breast-plate and placed on his head the helmet of succour and success; he clothed himself in deliverance in order to have vengeance upon those who hated and were hostile to him. He will give recompense to all the people of the islands, so that the name of the Lord may be feared in the western parts of the earth, and his majesty humbly acknowledged in its eastern parts.<sup>270</sup> The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) put on piety as a breast-plate, and placed on his head the helmet of rescue and success; he clothed himself | in deliverance and vengeance against the enemies of God; he gave recompense to the people of the islands; he made known the name of God in the eastern and western parts of the earth, and its people became subject to him. So where does this denial of him come from, and why are these prophecies rejected that have been manifested upon him? From where comes this fleeing from God by one who opposes him and deafens himself to his revelation and summons? 48r

In this Chapter he gives a prophecy that only the hopeless would reject, and only the most profoundly stupid and blind would not realise. For he again mentions Hagar, addressing her and Mecca, the lands of her descendants. He says, 'Rise up and make your lamp shine, for your time has arrived and the favour of God is rising upon you. Darkness has spread over the earth, and fog has enveloped the nations. But the Lord will rise up over you, and he will make clear his blessing upon you. The nations will travel to your light, and the kings to the brightness of your rising. Raise your eyes to what is around you and reflect, for they will all gather to you and make pilgrimage to you. Your sons will come to you from a distant land, and your daughters will be nursed on couches and thrones. Your heart will be refreshed, because the sea will flow to you and the armies of the nations will make pilgrimage to you, until numerous camels will fill you and your land will be too narrow for the files that will gather to you. The rams of Midian and the rams of Ephah will make their way to you, and the people of Sabā will come to you speaking of the blessings of God and glorifying him. All the flocks of Kedar will come to you, and the lambs of Nebaioth will serve you. To my altar will be raised what pleases me, and on that day I will renew praise [*ḥamd*] to the house of my

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270 Isaiah 59:15–18.

48v ايهديكم الله—نبوة قد ظهرت وآية قد برت وصدقت، وسارت<sup>1</sup> الأمم إلى نور الدين، ومالت إلى هذه الأمة ذخائر البحر، وحجت إلى مكة أرسال الأمم، وغمر<sup>2</sup> أهلها الإبل والقطرات عما يردّها من الرواحل والجمالات، وحجّ إليها أهل اليمن وأهل سبأ. وأشهر من ذلك وألزم لآذان المخالفين، فإنّ<sup>3</sup> قيذار<sup>4</sup> ونبأوت هما من أبناء إسماعيل عليه السلام، وقد احتوشوها وصاروا سدنّها<sup>5</sup> وخدّامها. وجدّد لبيت محدته حمداً محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>6</sup>. فإنّ لم يكن ذلك كذلك فليسمّوا لنا غير النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>7</sup> وغير مكة، وليعرضوا صفته على هذه الصفات، وقيسوا أحواله إلى هذه النبوات، لينتهك السترو ويبدو اليقين.

وقال في هذا الفصل: "هكذا يقول الربّ أنّه سيترجاني أهل الجزائر ومن في سفن تارسيس كما فعلوا من قبل، ويوردون عليك أبناءك من بلد بعيد ومعهم فضّتهم وذهبهم من أجل اسم الربّ إلهك قدّوس إسرائيل الذي أحمدك وأكرمك. ويبيّن أبناء الغرباء سورك وملوكهم يخدمونك، وتفتح<sup>8</sup> أبوابك في كلّ وقت وأوان من آناء الليل والنهار فلا تغلق،<sup>9</sup> ويدخل إليك أرسال الأمم ويقاد إليك ملوكهم أسرى، لأنّ كلّ أمة ومملكة لا تخضع لك تبدّد بيدودة،<sup>10</sup> وتصطلم الشعوب بالسيف اصطلاماً، وتأتيك الكرامة من صنوبر لبنان البيي<sup>11</sup> ومن أهلها ليُخبر به بيتي ويعظّم به موضع قدمي وتستقرّ<sup>12</sup> كرامتي. وتأتيك أبناء القوم الذين كانوا يذلّونك، ويقبل آثار أقدامك جميع من كان يؤذيك ويضطهدك، وأجعلك كرامة إلى الأبد وغبطة وفرحاً إلى دهر الداهرين، وسترضعين<sup>12</sup> ألبان الشعوب،

<sup>1</sup>Reading with D; A, B and C: وسار <sup>2</sup>C and D: وعمر <sup>3</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>4</sup>A: (sic) فآذار

(for) قيذار (sic). <sup>5</sup>C and D: سادتها <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>B: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: تفتح <sup>9</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D: تتغلق <sup>10</sup>So in A and B; C and D: ستورها (wrongly). <sup>11</sup>C and D: مستقر

ومستقر <sup>12</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: وسترضعي

praiseworthiness [*maḥmada*].<sup>271</sup> This too, | may God guide you, is a prophecy 48v  
 that has become apparent, and a sign that has been shown to be true and  
 trustworthy. The nations have come to the light of religion, and the treasures  
 of the sea have flowed to this community. Throngs of the nations have made  
 pilgrimage to Mecca, and camels and caravans have overwhelmed her people  
 with the coming of riding mounts and camels. And the people of Yemen and  
 Sabā have made pilgrimage there. Better known and more compelling than  
 this to the ears of the opponents, Kedar and Nebaioth are both from among  
 the descendants of Ishmael (peace be upon him);<sup>272</sup> they encompassed it and  
 became its gatekeepers and servants. And Muḥammad (may God bless him  
 and give him peace) has renewed praise [*ḥamd*] to the house of his *maḥmada*.  
 But if this is not so, let them name for us someone other than the Prophet  
 (may God bless him and give him peace), and somewhere other than Mecca.  
 Let them set out the portrayal of him alongside these portrayals and compare  
 his characteristics to those prophecies, so that the veil may be torn aside and  
 certainty appear.

He says in this Chapter, 'Thus says the Lord: The people of the isles will look  
 for me, and those who are in the ships of Tarshish, as they did before. They  
 will bring to you your sons from a distant land, and with them their silver and  
 gold, because of the name of the Lord your God, the holy One of Israel who  
 has made you praiseworthy [*aḥmadaki*], and has glorified you. The sons of  
 strangers will build your enclosure, and their kings will serve you. Your gates  
 will remain open at all times and hours, all night and day, and they will not  
 be closed. Throngs of the nations will enter you and their kings shall be led  
 as captives, for every nation and kingdom that does not submit to you will be  
 scattered; such nations will be utterly destroyed by the sword. The honour of  
 the handsome pines of Lebanon and its cypresses will come to you | so that my 49r  
 house may be made fragrant by it, the place of my foot made great by it and  
 my honour settled there. The sons of those who used to humiliate you will also  
 come to you, and all those who used to hurt you and oppress you will kiss the  
 imprints of your feet. I will make honour for you for ever, and exaltation and joy  
 eternally. You will suck the milk of the peoples, and acquire the spoils of kings,

271 Isaiah 60:1–7.

272 Cf. Genesis 25:13.

وستصيّبين من غنائم الملوك، وتتمزّزين من غاراتك عليهم، وتعلمين حينئذ أنّي أنا الربّ مخلصك، لأنّي أعطيك بدل النحاس ذهباً وبدل الحديد فضةً وبدل الخشب نحاساً وبدل الحجارة حديدًا، وأجعل السلامة مدبرك والصلاح والبرّ سلطانك، ويكون الربّ نورك ومصباحك إلى الأبد.

فافهموا يا بني عمي النبوة، وانظروا من ذا الذي بنى الغرباء سوره وخدمه الأعرّة، وسيق إليه الملوك مصفّدين مأسورين، ومن ذا الذي أباد وأهلك بالسيف كلّ مملكة وملة لم تخضع له. وهل تعلمون لقدم "خليل الله" مستقرّاً مذكوراً غير مكّة التي يحجّها خاشعين ويرفلون إلى بابها ساجدين ويأتونها من أقاصي الدنيا مُلبّين؟

وقال في الفصل الرابع والعشرين يخاطب النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup> أيضاً: "هكذا يقول الربّ قدّوس إسرائيل للذي<sup>2</sup> كانت نفسه مسترذلة مهانة ولمن كانت الأمم تستخفّ به وأتباع السلطان يهينونه: "ستقوم له الملوك إذا رأوه وتسجد له السلاطين لأنّ وعد الله حقّ، وهو قدّوس إسرائيل الذي انتخبك واختارك. وهو الذي يقول أجبتك عند الرضى ولدى الشدائد أعنتك واجتبتك وجعلتك<sup>3</sup> ميثاقاً للشعوب ونوراً للأمم لتطمئنّ بك الأرض، وترث موارث<sup>4</sup> الخرابات<sup>5</sup> وتقول للأسرى اخرجوا وانفكّوا، وللمحبّسين<sup>6</sup> اظهروا وانطلقوا وارعوا ماشيتكم حينئذ في الطرقات لأنّ مراعيكم تكون موجودة في كلّ جهة وسبيل، لا يجوعون ولا يعطشون ولا تضرّهم<sup>7</sup> السمام والشموس لأنّ رحمانهم معهم وهو يوردهم مشارع المياه وينابيعها، ويجعل الجبال كلّها طرقاً وفجاً جالهم، ويستغنون

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>B: الذي <sup>3</sup>B: وأعنتك <sup>4</sup>C and D: توارث (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>Reading with C and D; A and

B: الخرابات <sup>6</sup>B: والمحبيين <sup>7</sup>C and D: تضرّهم

and relish your attacks upon them, and on that day you will know that I am the Lord your Saviour. For I will give you gold in place of copper, silver in place of iron, copper in place of wood, and iron in place of stone. And I will make peace your dwelling place and piety and justice your power, and the Lord will be your light and your lamp forever.<sup>273</sup>

Understand, my cousins, the prophecy, and perceive who it is whose enclosure has been built by foreigners, whom the mighty serve, to whom kings have been driven bound and as captives, and who reduced to nothing and destroyed with the sword every kingdom and faith that did not submit to him. Do you know of the foot of the ‘friend of God’<sup>274</sup> and the abode mentioned other than Mecca to which people make pilgrimage in submission, at the doors of which they trail their clothes in prostration, and to which they go from the ends of the earth in response?

In Chapter 24, addressing the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), he also says, ‘Thus says the Lord, the holy One of Israel, to the one whose soul was considered low and shameful, he whom the nations used to despise and the followers of the powerful put to shame, that kings will rise for him when they see him, and the powerful will prostrate before him, because the promise of God is true. It is the holy One of Israel who has shown you and picked you out. He it is who says: I have answered you | readily, and amid difficulties I have helped you; I have picked you out and made you a covenant to the peoples and a light to the nations, so that the earth may find rest through you. You will receive as inheritance the places of desolation, and you will say to the captives: Depart and be freed; and to those imprisoned: Show yourselves and go on your way, care for your animals on the highways at that time because your pastures will be found in every direction and track. They will not hunger or thirst, nor will the hot winds or suns harm them, because their merciful One is with them and he will lead them to places of water and their springs. He will make all the mountains into pathways and passes for them, and so they will have no need

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<sup>273</sup> Isaiah 60:9–19.

<sup>274</sup> This is a second reference to the *maqām Ibrāhīm*, a stone near the *ka’ba* believed to bear the footprint of Abraham, who is called in the Qur’ān ‘friend of God’, *khalīl Allāh* (4:125).

لذلك عن المسالك والطرق، ويتوافى القوم من بلد شاسع بعيد، بعض من جهة الجرياء وبعض من البحر<sup>1</sup> وبعض من بحر سنيم.<sup>2</sup> فسبحي أيّها السماء واهتزي أيّها الأرض فرحاً، وابتهجي أيّها الجبال بالحمد، فقد تلاقى الربّ شعبه ورحم المساكين من خلقه.

فهذا إفصاح وليس بمحكمة وتصريح ليس بدمدمة ونبوة واضحة مؤكدة لما تقدّم قبلها من النبوة. فلعمري ما ورث الخرابات<sup>3</sup> ولا فكّ الأسرى من الحبوس والقيد،<sup>4</sup> ولا رعى في الطرق بعد الحصار والجهد الذي كانت فيه العرب من قبل كسرى وقيصر، ولا صيرت الجبال طرقاً وفجاًجاً إلا لهذا النبيّ وأمتّه التي<sup>5</sup> ذكرها<sup>6</sup> أشعيا النبيّ عليه السلام أنها كانت مُستزلة مُهانة. فأما معنى قوله "قدّوس إسرائيل"، فإنه لما خاطب بني إسرائيل سمّى الله بالإسم الذي كان بنو إسرائيل يسمونه به.

5or

وقال في هذا الفصل وخاطب في بعضه هاجر ومكة: "أنا رسمتك على كفي فأسوارك أمامي في كلّ وقت. وسيأتيك ولدك سراعاً، ويخرج عنك من أراد أن يتحيّفك ويخرّبك.<sup>7</sup> فارفعي بصرك إلى ما فوقك وانظري فإنهم يأتونك ويجمعون عن آخرهم إليك. يقول الله قسمًا بإسمه: "إني أنا الحيّ لتلبسهم مثل الحلة ولتزينن بالأكاليل مثل العروس. ولتضيّقن عنك قفارك وخراباتك والأرض التي ألجأوك إليها وضغطوك فيها من كثرة سكّانها والراغبين فيها، وليهربن منك من كان

<sup>1</sup>B omits: البحر من بعض من 2B: سينهم 3Reading with C and D; A and B: الخرابات 4Reading with the emendation in C and D; A and B: والقّد 5C: الذي (wrongly). 6A note written in the same hand in B reads: أي في الأصحاح التاسع والأربعين 7Reading with C and D; A and B: ويخرّنك



of tracks and roadways. People will arrive from remote and distant lands, some from the north-west, some from the sea, and some from the sea of Sinīm. So sing, heavens, tremble, earth, in joy, and be glad, mountains, with praise [*al-ḥamd*]. For the Lord has come to his people and has shown mercy to the poor among his creatures.<sup>275</sup>

This is a straightforward statement and not a babble, clarification and not muttering, a clear prophecy confirming prophecies that came before it. For indeed, no one has inherited the places of desolation, or freed the prisoners from prisons and bonds, given care on the highways after the constraint and strain which the Arabs experienced under Chosroes and Caesar, or for whom the mountains were made pathways and passes, except this Prophet and his community, which Isaiah the prophet (peace be upon him) refers to as being thought low and shameful. About the meaning of his words, ‘the holy One of Israel’, since he was addressing the People of Israel, he called God by the name with which the People | of Israel used to call him.

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He says in this chapter, in part of it addressing Hagar and Mecca, ‘I have recorded you on the palm of my hand, so that your walls are before me at all times. Your children will come to you with haste, and will expel from you those who want to harm you and lay you waste. So lift up your eyes to what is above you and see: they will come to you, and to the last of them they will gather to you. God says, swearing by his name, I am the living One; you will indeed put them on as a garment, and you will be adorned in garlands like a bride. Your deserts and desolate places, and the land to which they relegated you and in which they pressed you will be too small for you because of the numbers of those living there and those desiring to be there. And those who were your enemies and wronged you will flee from you. The children who are to come

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275 Isaiah 49:7–13.

يناوأك ويهتضمك. وليقولنّ لك ولد عقبك<sup>1</sup> آيتها الزور الرقوب إنه قد ضاقت بنا  
البلاد فتزحزحوا وانفرجوا فيها لتسع في فيا فيها. وستحدثن نفسك حينئذ فتقولين:  
”من رزقني هؤلاء كلهم وها أنا وحيدة فريدة زور رقوب، وها أنا مسيبة والهة  
مستركة، فمن ربّي لي هؤلاء ومن تكفل لي بهم؟“

فأيّ تصريح وإبانة وتنوير أبين وأنور من هذا؟ فقد أقسم الله بنفسه، وبرّ قسمه  
ولم يخلف وعده أنّه يصير الأمم لباساً لهم كالخلّة وزينة كالخلية. فهكذا العرب  
وهكذا مكّة وما تلبس في كلّ سنة من فاخر الديباج والتاج، ويحمل إليها من  
نفيس الجواهر والصدقات من دار الخلافة وآفاق المملكة، أو من صاحب القفار  
والخرابات الذي كان مضغوطاً فيها مضطراً إليها غير هذه الأمة البدوية الحجازية؟  
ومن الفريدة الوحيدة الوالهة المسيبة المستركة التي خاطبها الله غير هاجر؟ فهل من  
ناظر لنفسه ناصح وهل من مراقب عليها مشفق؟

وقال في هذا الفصل<sup>2</sup>: ”هكذا يقول الربّ ها<sup>3</sup> أنا رافع يدي على الأمم، وناصب  
لها آية وهي أنّ الناس يأتونك بأبنائك<sup>4</sup> على أيديهم، ويحملون بناتك على أكتافهم،  
وتكون الملوك ظؤورتك وعقائل نسائهم وشرائفهن مرضعاتك، ويخرجون على  
وجوههم سجداً لك على الأرض ويلحسون تراب أقدامك، وتعلمين حينئذ أنّي  
أنا الربّ الذي لا يخزي الراجون لي لديّ“.

فهذه أيضاً نبوة لم تستغل ولم تبطل، فلقد أتت الأمم من أقاصي الشرق والغرب  
والسند والهند وآفاق البربر والبادي بنسل هاجر وعترتها الذين توالدوا في بلدانهم

ذكر هذا في الأصحاح<sup>2</sup> A note written in the same hand in B reads: عقمك<sup>1</sup> Reading with B; A:

بأبنائك<sup>4</sup> B: 3B omits this word. 49.

will say to you: You who are barren and childless, the lands are too small for us, so make clearances and spread out in them so that we may expand in their deserts. On that day you will speak to yourself and say: Who has blessed me with all of these, I who am alone and solitary, barren and childless; I who am neglected, afflicted and enslaved? Who has brought them up for me, and who has fed them for me?'<sup>276</sup>

Can there be any clarification, explanation or elucidation clearer or more lucid than this? For God has sworn by himself and kept to his oath, not abandoning his promise that he would make the nations a covering for them like a garland, and an adornment like finery. For such are the Arabs and such is Mecca, and what is clothed every year with a magnificent silk brocade and crown,<sup>277</sup> and to which are carried precious jewels and offerings from the centre of the caliphate and remote parts of the realm. And who is master of the deserts and desolate places where it was confined and restricted other than | this nomad Ḥijāzī community? And who was solitary and alone, afflicted, neglected and enslaved, whom God addressed, other than Hagar? Is there any-  
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one who will look to advise his own soul, who will turn to it in pity?

In this Chapter he says, 'Thus says the Lord: Behold I am lifting up my hand before the nations and raising a sign for them, which is that the people will bring you your sons in their hands and carry your daughters upon their shoulders. Kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their best and most noble wives your nursing mothers, and they will fall down on their faces, prostrating before you on the earth, and they will lick the dust of your feet. And on that day you will know that I am the Lord, and those who look for me will not be put to shame.'<sup>278</sup>

This too is a prophecy that cannot be regarded as null and void. For indeed, nations from the farthest east and west, from Sind and India, from the distant lands of the Berbers and the Bedouin have brought the seed and offspring of Hagar who were born in their countries to Mecca in the most solemn

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<sup>276</sup> Isaiah 49:16–21.

<sup>277</sup> A reference to the *kiswa*, the cover of the *ka'ba*, that was renewed annually.

<sup>278</sup> Isaiah 49:22–23.

إلى مكة يزفونهم زفاً ويعنقونهم تعنيقاً<sup>1</sup> ولقد أرضعت ملوكهم وعقائل نساءهم أبناء إسماعيل عليه السلام وبناته، وخرت الأمم لله بمكة على وجوهها سجداً، ولحست الجبابرة مواقع قدم إبراهيم وأقدام النبي صلى الله عليهما<sup>2</sup> وسلم تذلاً وتبركاً وتخشعاً.

وقال في هذا الفصل<sup>3</sup>: "من ذا الذي أقبل من أدوم وثيابه أشد حمرة من البسر؟ وأراه بهياً في حله ولباسه، وعزيزاً<sup>4</sup> لكثرة خيله وأجناده. إني أنا الناطق بالحق والمخلص للأقوام، وإنّ لدينا ليوم الفتنة نكلاً، ولقد اقتربت ساعة النجاة وحانت سنة تخليصي، لأنّي نظرتُ فلم أجِدْ مَنْ يعينني | وتعجبتُ إذ ليس مَنْ ينيب إلى رأيي. فخلصني عند ذلك ذراعي وثبت بالغضب قدي، ودستُ الأمم بزجري،<sup>5</sup> وأشقيتُ حدودهم بغيظي واحتدامي، ودفنتُ عزهم تحت الأرض"، فتدبروا هذه أيضاً ولا تكونوا من الممترين.

وتنبأ أشعيا عن الله تعالى في هذا الفصل وتعقب تلك النبوة فقال: "إنّي جعلتُ إسمك محمداً، فانظر من<sup>6</sup> محالك ومساكنك يا محمد ويا قدّوس، لأنك أنت الرب أبونا ومخلصنا، واسمك موجود منذ الأبد". فهذا شبيه بما تقدّم من نبوة داود النبي عليه السلام في قوله: "إنّ اسمه موجود قبل الشمس"، ويقول في الزبور أيضاً: "إنّ في جبله قدّوساً ومحمداً".

وهذا هو التسمية وفيه الكفاية لمن لم تغلب عليه شقوته ولم يمدّ له في طغيانه. فأما معنى قول أشعيا النبي عليه السلام إنه "قدّوس"، فإنّ "القدّوس" في اللغة السريانية

<sup>1</sup>So in A and B; C and D: ويعنقونهم تعنيقاً (sic). <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>A note written in the same hand

in the margin of B reads: ذكر هذا في الأصحاح ٦٣. <sup>4</sup>C and D: عزيزاً <sup>5</sup>So in A and B; C and D:

يا: <sup>7</sup>C and D: إلى <sup>6</sup>B: (sic). <sup>6</sup>B: برجزي

processions, embracing them warmly. Their kings too and their best wives suckled the sons and daughters of Ishmael (peace be upon him), and in Mecca the nations bowed down on their faces in prostration to God, and tyrants licked the places of Abraham's foot and the Prophet's feet (may God bless them and give them peace) humbling themselves, seeking blessing and bringing themselves low.

In this Chapter he says, 'Who is this coming from Edom with his garments redder than ripening dates? I see him splendid in his attire and dress, and mighty in the multitude of his horses and fighting men. It is I who speak what is true and save the peoples. And for us this is a day of trial for exemplary punishment. The hour of deliverance has drawn near, and the year of my redeeming has approached. For I looked and I did not find anyone to help me, | and I was surprised that there was none to represent my view. Because of this my own arm brought me salvation, and my foot was fixed on anger. I have trampled the nations with my rebuke, I have harassed their boundaries with my wrath and fury, and I have interred their might beneath the earth.'<sup>279</sup> Ponder this also, and do not be among those who doubt.

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In this Chapter, following this prophecy Isaiah prophesies on behalf of God almighty, saying, 'I have made your name greatly praised [*Muḥammad*]; so look from your surroundings and dwelling places, O Muḥammad, O holy one. For you are the lord, our father and our saviour. Your name has been from eternity.'<sup>280</sup> This is similar to the prophecy of the prophet David (peace be upon him) given above in his words, 'His name existed before the sun',<sup>281</sup> and his word in the Psalms also, 'In his mountain is a holy one and Muḥammad.'<sup>282</sup>

This is a mentioning by name, and in it is enough for anyone whose wretchedness has not overcome him and who has not been too long under his own oppression. As for the meaning of the prophet Isaiah's (peace be upon him) words that he is 'holy', in Syriac 'the holy one' is the devout, pure man.

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<sup>279</sup> Isaiah 63:1–6.

<sup>280</sup> Isaiah 63:15–16.

<sup>281</sup> Psalm 72:17, above pp. 346–347.

<sup>282</sup> Psalm 48:1, above pp. 344–345.

الرجل البرّ الطاهر، وكذلك إسم "الرّب" واقع على "السادات" كما قد بينّا. فَنَ لم يقنع بهذه ولم يخضع لها عائد الرّب صراحاً، وقد سمّى النبيّ فيها مرّتين تسمية لم تدعهم في شبهة. فَإِنَّ غالط مغالط فقال: "إِنَّ قول الله تعالى "يا محمد ويا قدّوس"، إِنَّمَا يقع على المساكن التي ذكرها، فَإِنَّ الكُتّاب السريانيّ يكذّبه لأنّه لو أراد بذلك المساكن لقال: "قدّوسين ومحمّدين" ولم يقل: "قدّوساً ومحمّداً".

51V وقال في هذا الفصل: "اعبروا عبروا الباب وردّوا الطريق على الأمّة. سهّلوا السبيل وذلّوها ونحو الحجارة عن سننها، وارفعوا للأمّة علماً ومناراً فَإِنَّ الرّب أسمع نداءه مَنْ في أقطار الأرض، فقال<sup>1</sup> لابنة صهيون: "إنّه قد قرب مجيء مَنْ يخلّصك، أجره معه وعمله قدّامه، ويسمّون<sup>2</sup> شعباً طاهراً خلّصهم الرّب، وتسمّين أنت: "أيتّها القرية التي أدال الله لها من أعدائها ولم يخذلها ربّها". فهؤلاء هم الشعب الطاهر الذي خلّصهم الرّب، وتلك القرية المدالة من أعدائها المنتقم لها هي مكّة وأهلها. وهذا قائم صحيح في مجاز لغة<sup>3</sup> العرب، فإنّهم يقولون: "سلّ القرية"، وهم يريدون: "سلّ أهل القرية".

وقال<sup>4</sup> أشعيا: "ستمتليّ البادية والمدائن من قصور آل قيذان ويسبّحون، من رؤوس الجبال ينادون، هم الذين يجعلون لله الكرامة ويزجون تسبيحه في البرّ والبحر". فأيتّ بادية هي التي امتلأت من قصور آل قيذان غير هذه البادية؟ فهم الذين ينادون الله بالآذان والتلبية من رؤوس الجبال، ويجعلون لله المجد والكرامة، والحجّ لبيت الله والتعظيم لآلائه.

<sup>1</sup>C and D: فقلّ <sup>2</sup>B: يسّمون <sup>3</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>4</sup>The following sentences are added in

the margin of A, but are inserted in the middle of the preceding paragraph of B (between أدال الله).

And likewise the term 'lord' refers to 'masters', as we have shown. Whoever is not convinced by this and does not bow to it opposes the Lord openly when he has twice named the Prophet in it, a name which cannot have left them in doubt. If someone deceitfully raises a quibble and says, 'God almighty's words "O much praised one, Muḥammad, O holy one" in fact apply to the dwellings which he has mentioned', the Syriac text would prove him wrong, because if he intended by this the dwellings, then he would have said, 'O holy ones, O much praised ones', and would not have said, 'Holy one and much praised one.'

In this Chapter he says, | 'Go through, go through the gate and restore the path for the community. Make the way smooth and make it even, and remove the stones from its ways. Raise up for the community a sign and guiding light. For the Lord has made his call heard by those who are in the ends of the earth, and has said to the daughter of Zion, "The coming of the One who will save you is near. His recompense is with him and his deed is before him." They will be called a pure people whom the Lord has redeemed, and you will be called "O town, to which God has given governance from her enemies and whose Lord has not deserted her"'.<sup>283</sup> These are the pure people whom God has redeemed, and this town which has been given governance from her enemies and which has been avenged is Mecca and its people. This is definite and correct as a figurative expression in the language of the Arabs. For they say, 'Ask the town',<sup>284</sup> when they mean, 'Ask the people of the town.'

Isaiah says: 'The desert and the towns will be filled with the palaces of the people of Qaydhān, and they will sing praises; they will call out from the tops of the mountains, those who give honour to God and spur on his praise over land and sea.'<sup>285</sup> Now, what desert is it that has been filled with the palaces of the people of Qaydhān other than this desert? They are the ones who call out 'God' from the tops of the mountains in the call to prayer and the pilgrim song, and give glory and honour to God, pilgrimage to the house of God and exaltation for his blessings.

<sup>283</sup> Isaiah 62:10–12.

<sup>284</sup> Q 12:82.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. Isaiah 42:11–12, though there is less correspondence than in the version above, pp. 350–351.

## نبوة هوشاع النبي عليه السلام على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup>

وقال هوشاع: "قال الرب أنا الرب الإله الذي رعيتك في البدو وفي أرض خراب قفر غير مأهول ليس بها أنيس". فهذه من نبوة هوشاع شبيهة بما تقدّم من نبوات أشعيا، فلنسنا نعرف أحداً رعاه الله في البدو وفي أرض قفر غير النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>2</sup>.

وقال في هذا الفصل مؤكداً لقوله هذا يصف أمته أنها أمة جليظة عزيزة لم يكن مثلها قط ولا يكون، وأن النار<sup>3</sup> تحرق أمامها وتوقد وخلفها الضرائر. فهذه هي الأمة العزيزة التي<sup>4</sup> لم يكن مثلها أمة قط ولا يكون. وهذا النبي الذي رباه الله ورعاه في القفر اليباب والبدو والخراب. وهذه نبوة موجزة كافية لمن وفقه الله<sup>5</sup> لرشده. فإن من كان الله راعيه ومعظمه، والشاهد له بأن لم يكن في الدنيا أمة أعزّ وأعظم منها ولا يكون مثلها، فقد وجب على الناس تعظيمه والإعتراف بتقدمه<sup>6</sup> وفضله. ومن لم يفعل ذلك كان مخالفاً لله وعلى<sup>8</sup> سبيل المعاصي والضلال. وقد شهد هوشاع النبي عليه السلام بأن الأمة التي لم يكن مثلها قط هي هذه الأمة، فليس لذي مراقبة ولب أن ينسب هذه النبوة إلى يحيى بن زكريا ولا إلى أمة غير المسلمين.

قد سبقت<sup>3A</sup> note written in the same hand in the margin of B reads: صلعم<sup>2B</sup>: صلعم<sup>1B</sup>: هذه النار في كلام داود عليه وعلى نبيينا السلام، وفي القرآن: كنتم جزآن أخرجت للناس C omit this word. <sup>5</sup>The following words are repeated in A: وفقه الله لرشده <sup>6</sup>Reading with C على<sup>8B</sup>: This word is repeated in B. <sup>7</sup>بتقدمه A and B; D; A and B: بتقدمه



**The prophecy of the prophet Hosea (peace be upon him) about the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace)**

Hosea says, 'The Lord says, I am the Lord God who tended you in the desert and in a bleak and desolate land, uninhabited and without a soul.'<sup>286</sup> This from the prophecy of Hosea is similar to the preceding prophecies of Isaiah. And we do not know of anyone whom God tended in the desert and in an empty land other than the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace).

In this Chapter, to confirm these words of his, he says, describing his<sup>287</sup> community, that it is a great and mighty community, which there has never been any like nor will be, with fire burning and igniting before it and harm after it. This is the great community, which there has been no community like nor will there be. And this Prophet is the one whom God brought up and tended in the waste bleakness and desolate desert. And this is a concise prophecy, enough for someone to whom God has given | his guidance. So he to whom God is shepherd and glorifier, and to whom he is witness that there has never been in the world a community more powerful and greater than it and will not be like it, people must glorify and acknowledge his precedence and superiority. Anyone who does not do this will be opposed to God and will be on the path of sinfulness and error. The prophet Hosea (peace be upon him) has witnessed that the community which there has never been any other like is this community. Therefore, no one with circumspection or intelligence can ascribe this prophecy to John son of Zechariah, nor to any community other than the Muslims.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Hosea 13:5.

<sup>287</sup> Muḥammad's community.

<sup>288</sup> For Christian exegetes, the reference in Luke 1:80 to John the Baptist being in the desert until the time he began his preaching would make a natural link with this verse in Hosea.

## نبوة ميخا النبي على النبي صلى الله عليهما وسلم

قال: "إنه يكون في آخر الأيام جبل بيت الرب مبنياً على قلال الجبال وفي أرفع رؤوس العوالي، وتأتيه جميع الأمم وتسير إليه أمم كثيرة وهم يقولون: تعالوا نطلع إلى جبل الرب". فهذه صفة مكة صراحاً، فهي التي تحج إليها الأمم الكثيرة ويسعون لها ويسیرون إليها وهم يلبون. فإن شغب شاغب فقال: "إنه عنى بيت المقدس"، فكيف يصح له ذلك وقد بين الله أنه يكون ذلك في آخر الأيام، وكان بيت المقدس في زمان هذا النبي موجوداً؟ وإنما تنبأ النبي على شيء يحدث لا على ما قد<sup>1</sup> كان ومضى.

## نبوة حبقوق النبي على النبي صلى الله عليهما وسلم

وهي نظيمة<sup>2</sup> نبوة موسى عليه السلام بل أنور وأظهر منها لأنه سمي النبي عليه السلام مرتين. قال حبقوق النبي عليه السلام: "إن الله جاء من التيمن والقدوس من جبل فاران. لقد انكسفت السماء من بهاء محمد وامتألت الأرض من حمده. يكون شعاع منظره مثل النور ويحيط بلده بعزه. تسير المنايا أمامه، وتصحب سباع الطير أجناده. قام ففسح الأرض، ثم تأمل الأمم وبحث عنها. فتضعضت الجبال القديمة واتضعضت الروابي الدهرية، وتزعزعت ستور أهل مدين. ولقد حاز المساعي القديمة، وغضب الرب على الأنهار، فجزك في الأنهار واحتدام صولتك في البحار. ركبت الخيول وعلوت مراكب الإنقاذ والغوث، وستنزع في قسيك إغراقاً ونزعاً<sup>3</sup>. وترتوي السهام بأمرك يا محمد ارتواءً، وتحترث الأرض

<sup>1</sup>B and C omit this word. <sup>2</sup>B: نظيرة <sup>3</sup>B and C: وترعاً

**The prophecy of the prophet Micah about the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace)**

He says, 'At the end of days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be founded on the summits of the mountains and on the topmost of the high peaks. All the nations will come to it, and many nations will journey to it, saying, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord."<sup>289</sup> Now this is clearly a characteristic of Mecca, for it is to her that the many nations make pilgrimage, to which they hasten and journey, confessing obedience. If some troublemaker should stir things up by saying, 'He meant Jerusalem', how can this be true for him when God has made it clear that this will be at the end of days, while Jerusalem was in existence at the time of this prophet? For the prophet would only have prophesied about a thing that was to take place, not about something that had been and was past.

**The prophecy of the prophet Habakkuk about the Prophet (peace be upon them)**

This is in line with the prophecy of Moses (peace be upon him),<sup>290</sup> though clearer and more explicit than it, because he names the Prophet (peace be upon him) twice. The prophet Habakkuk (peace be upon him) says, 'God came from Teman and the holy one from Mount Paran. The heaven was eclipsed by the splendour of Muḥammad and the earth was filled with his praise [*ḥamd*]. The beams of his appearance will be like light and he will encompass his country with his might. Before him goes Doom, and birds of prey accompany his armies. He stood and surveyed the earth and then he pondered on the nations and sought them out. The ancient mountains collapsed, and the everlasting hills sank low. The curtains of the people of Midian trembled, and he had gained control of the ancient ways. The Lord was angry against the rivers. Your anger is in the rivers, and the fury of your assault is in the seas. You rode on horses and mounted on the chariots of deliverance and help. You will draw from your bows to excess and more, and the arrows will be fully quenched at your command,

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289 Micah 4:1–2.

290 Deuteronomy 33:2.

بالأنهار. ولقد رأيتك الجبال فارتاعت، وانحرف عنك شؤبوب السيل،<sup>1</sup> ونعرت  
المهاوي نعيراً ورعباً، ورفعت أيديها وجللاً وخوفاً، وتوقفت الشمس والقمر عن  
مجرهما لك،<sup>2</sup> وسارت العساكر في بريق سهامك ولمعان نيازكك. تدوخ الأرض  
غضباً، وتدوس الأمم رجراً لأنك ظهرت لخلاص أمّتك وإنقاذ تراث آبائك.

فهذه النبوة الباهرة الجليلة التي لا شك فيها ولا مرية، فقد نطقنا بالحق وباحت  
بالمكتوم وكشفت الأغشية وأزالت الشبهات. وسمى الله النبي صلى الله عليه  
وسلم<sup>3</sup> تسميةً مرتين، وأخبر أن المنايا تسير أمامه، وتصحب سباع الطير راياته،<sup>53r</sup>  
وأنه يركب الخيل ويظهر الخلاص وترتوي السهام بأمره من الدماء.<sup>4</sup> وهو الذي  
وقفت الشمس والقمر عن مجاريهما له، وسارت العساكر في بريق سهامه ولمعان  
نيازكه. فإن لم يكن هو الذي وصفنا، فمن إذّا؟ لعلمهم بنو إسرائيل المأسورون  
المسيبيون، أو النصاري الخاضعون المستسلمون. وكيف يكون ذلك وقد سمي  
فيها النبي مرتين، ووصف عساكره وحروبه وأنه يدوس الأمم دوساً ويدوّخهم  
غضباً ورجراً. فدعوا يا بني عمي اللجاج والمحك،<sup>6</sup> وتجرعوا مرارات الحق وأفيقوا  
من سكرهم، وافهموا عن الله تعالى وعن أنبيائه البررة الطيبين عليهم السلام  
والصلاة<sup>8</sup> أجمعين.

<sup>1</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: السيل <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; A omits this word. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>C

and D: الرماء <sup>5</sup>B: قد <sup>6</sup>B omits this word which is inserted above the line in A in the same hand.

<sup>7</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: سكره <sup>8</sup>B: الصلاة والسلام

Muḥammad. You have furrowed the earth with rivers, the mountains saw you and were alarmed, and the downpour of the flood diverted from you. The chasms roared in extreme alarm and raised up their hands in fear and dread. The sun and moon stood still in their course, and the armies marched in the glint of your arrows and in the flashing of your lances. You will conquer the earth in anger and trample the nations in wrath, because you appeared for the salvation of your community and for the rescue of your fathers' inheritance.<sup>291</sup>

This brilliant and portentous prophecy in which there is no doubt or dispute has imparted the truth, disclosed what is hidden, removed the coverings and done away with uncertainties. God has named the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) twice by name and declared that doom | goes before him and birds of prey accompany his banners, that he will ride horses and bring forth salvation and that at his command the arrows will be quenched in blood. He is the one for whom the sun and moon stood still in their course and the armies marched in the glint of his arrows and in the flashing of his lances. And if it is not him we have described, then who is it? Maybe it is the bound and captive People of Israel, or the submissive, unresisting Christians. Though how can this be, when he has named the Prophet twice in it and described his armies and wars, and how he will trample the nations and conquer them in anger and punishment? So, my cousins, put aside stubbornness and contentiousness, gulp down the bitterness of truth, get over your drunkenness and understand about God almighty and his pious, godly prophets (peace and prayer be upon them all).

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291 Habakkuk 3:3–13.

## نبوة صفنيا النبي على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>1</sup>

قال: "يقول الرب أيها الناس ترجوا اليوم الذي أقوم فيه للشهادة، فقد حان أن أظهر حكمي بحشر الأمم كلها وجميع الملوك، لأصّب عليهم رجزي وأليم سخطي، فستحترق الأرض كلها احتراقاً بسخطي ونكيري. هنالك أجدد للأمم اللغة المختارة ليدوقوا اسم الرب جميعاً، ويعبدوه في ربة واحدة معاً، ويأتوني بالذبائح في تلك الأيام من معابر أنهار كوش".

وهذا صفنيا الذي قد نطق بالوحي وأخبر عن الله بمثل ما أدّى أصحابه، ووصف الأمة التي تشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وتجتمع على عبادته وتأتيه بالذبائح من سواحل السودان ومعابر الأنهار. واللغة المختارة هي اللسان العربي<sup>53v</sup> المبين الذي ليس بطمطي ولا فارسي ولا سوفسطي. وهي التي قد شاعت في الأمم، فنطقوا بها وتجددوا بما جدد لهم منها. فأما العبرانية فكانت لغة تلك الأنبياء، وأما السريانية فما تجاوزت قطّ بلد سوريا. وكذلك الرومية لم تجاوز الروم، ولا تجاوزت الفارسية مدينة إيران شهر. وظهرت العربية إلى منقطع التراب وبوادي الترك وبلاد الخزر والهند.

## نبوة زكريّا النبي على النبي صلى الله عليهما وسلم<sup>2</sup> مؤكدة لنبوة صفنيا عليه السلام

"أنّه يكون الرب الإله يومئذ ملك الأرض كلها، ويكون يومئذ رباً واحداً وإسمه إسماً واحداً<sup>3</sup>. وقد صدقت النبوة، وصحّ الوحي، وصار الدين واحداً والرب

واسمه إسماً واحداً<sup>3</sup> C and D omit: صلعم<sup>2</sup> B: صلعم<sup>1</sup>

**The prophecy of the prophet Zephaniah about the Prophet (may  
God bless him and give him peace)**

He says, 'The Lord says: People, look for the day in which I will rise up to witness. The time has come for me to make known my judgement amongst the gathering of all the nations and all the kings, to pour upon them my punishment and my intense indignation. For the whole earth will be consumed by my indignation and revulsion. There I will renew the chosen language for the nations, so that they may all sample the name of the Lord and serve him all in one tether. They will bring me sacrifices in those days from the crossing places of the rivers of Kush.'<sup>292</sup>

This is Zephaniah who spoke in revelation and declared similar things from God to what his companions had brought. He described the community that witnesses there is no god but God alone with no partner to him, and comes together to worship him and brings him sacrifices from the coasts of Sudan and crossing places of the rivers. And the chosen | language is the clear Arabic tongue which is not barbaric, outlandish or sophistical. It is this that has spread among the nations so that they have spoken it and have been renewed by the renewal for them in it. Hebrew was the language of these prophets, and Syriac never spread beyond the country of Syria. Similarly, Greek never spread beyond the Byzantines, and Persian does not spread beyond the city of Iranshahr,<sup>293</sup> while Arabic has appeared as far as dust extends, the deserts of the Turks and the countries of the Khazars and India.<sup>294</sup>

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**The prophecy of the prophet Zechariah about the Prophet (may  
God bless them and give them peace) confirming the prophecy of  
Zephaniah (peace be upon him)**

'On that day the Lord God will be king of all the earth, and on that day there will be one Lord, and his name will be one.'<sup>295</sup> The prophecy has proved to be true and the revelation has been borne out, the religion has become one

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<sup>292</sup> Zephaniah 3:8–10.

<sup>293</sup> Nishāpūr in Khurāsān, which was known by this name.

<sup>294</sup> The Khazars were a tribal confederation in the southern Russian steppes among whom Islam, as well as Judaism, was spreading during 'Alī's lifetime. In referring to their territory and to India 'Alī is obviously making a geographical point, but he may also have in mind the expansion of Islam on its base of the Arabic language.

<sup>295</sup> Zechariah 14:9.

واحدًا، لا ثنية فيه ولا ثلث، ولا تكثير ولا تعطيل، واسمه واحد، لا<sup>1</sup> تلبس فيه ولا إشراك.

وقال زكريّا عليه السلام أيضًا: "يكون في ذلك اليوم حتى على لجام الفرس قدس الرب". ومعنى "قدس الرب" هاهنا اسم الرب واسم نبيّه عليه السلام. وذلك موجود يومنا هذا على كلّ ملبس ومنزل وسلاح وغير ذلك، وهو اليوم الذي وصفه الله عزّ وجلّ.

### نبوة إرميا النبيّ على النبيّ صلى الله عليهما وسلّم<sup>2</sup>

وهي شبيهة بنبوءات أشعيا وغيره عليهم السلام، خاطب الله بها النبيّ عليه السلام. قال في الفصل الأوّل: "من قبل أن أصورك في الرحم عرفتك، ومن قبل أن<sup>54r</sup> تخرج من البطن قدّستك وجعلتك نبياً للأمم، لأنّك بكلّ ما أمرك تصدع، وإلى كلّ من أرسلك تتوجّه، فأنا معك لخلاصك، يقول الرب. وأفرغتُ كلامي في فمك إفراغاً فتأمّل وانظر، فقد سلّطتك اليوم على الأمم والمملكات لتنسّف وتهدم وتبهر وتسحق وتبني وتغرس من رأيت". فقد شقّع إرميا عليه السلام نبوءات أصحابه بالتأكيد والتأييد، ووصف من أجرى كلمة الله على فمه، ومن سلّطه الله على انتساف أمم وإبادة أمم وسحق أمم واستحياء أمم. فاكتفوا بذلك علماً واتخذوه برهاناً، يسلم لكم دينكم ويجعلكم من عباده الفائزين. فلن يجد الراغب الراهب سبيلاً إلى أن ينسب هذه النبوة إلى نصرانيّ ولا يهوديّ ولا غيرهما.

صلعم<sup>2B</sup>: ولا<sup>1B</sup>:



and the Lord is one with no duality in him or tripling or multiplying or divesting,<sup>296</sup> and his name is one without obscurity in it or association of partners.

Zechariah (peace be upon him) also says, 'On that day the holiness of the Lord will even be upon the horse's bridle.'<sup>297</sup> Here the meaning of 'the holiness of the Lord' is the name of the Lord and the name of his Prophet (peace be upon him). In our time this is to be found on every garment, house, weapon and so on, and this is the day which God, great and mighty, has described.

### **The prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah about the Prophet (may God bless them and give them peace)**

This is like the prophecies of Isaiah and others (peace be upon them), through which God addresses the prophet (peace be upon him).

He says in the first Chapter, 'Before | I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you emerged from the belly I sanctified you and made you a prophet to the nations, for you to carry out everything I have commanded you and to go to all to whom I send you. For I am with you to redeem you, says the Lord. I have poured out my word that is in your mouth, so look and see, for I have given you power this day over the nations and kingdoms to scatter, destroy, pull down, wipe out, build up and set in place whomever you will.'<sup>298</sup>

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Jeremiah (peace be upon him) adds confirmation and support to the prophecies of his companions and describes the one from whose mouth the word of God was made to pour and the one to whom God gave power to scatter nations, annihilate nations, pull down nations and give life to nations. Be satisfied with this as knowledge and take it as proof. May God give you Islam as your religion and place you among his victorious servants. No person who is avid or is filled with awe will find a way to attribute this prophecy to a Christian, or a Jew or anyone else.

296 If the words *wa-lā takthīr wa-lā ta'tīl* are any more than a rhetorical conclusion of the thought here, they may contain an allusion to debates at this time about the qualities with which God was predicated, whether these derived from attributes that were real and located in his essence (*ṣifāt al-dhāt*), which threatened to make him multiple, or were no more than statements that did not relate to actual attributes in God's being, which threatened to 'divest' him of all characteristics. Upholders of the reality of attributes, among them 'Alī's contemporary 'Abd Allāh ibn Kullāb (d. c. 855), were often accused of *takthīr*, while many Mu'tazili thinkers, who denied that the attributes were additional to God's essence, were accused of *ta'tīl*.

297 Zechariah 14:20.

298 Jeremiah 1:5–10.

وقال في الفصل الرابع: "إني مبيح عليكم يا بني إسرائيل من البعد أمة عزيزة، أمة قديمة، لا يفهم لسانها وكلهم مجرب<sup>1</sup> جبار". فهذه هي الأمة العزيزة التي لم تعرف بنو إسرائيل لسانها ولغتها وكلهم مجرب<sup>2</sup> جبار، وهم أصحاب اللغة الجديدة التي ذكرها الله على لسان صفنيا النبي عليه السلام.

وقال في الفصل التاسع عشر: "إني جاعل بعد تلك الأيام شريعتي في أفواههم وأكتبها على قلوبهم، وأكون لهم إلهاً ويكونون لي شعباً، ولا يحتاج الرجل أن يعلم أخاه وقريبه الدين والملة، ولا إلى أن يقول له | "اعرف الرب"، لأن جميعهم يعرفونه صغارهم وكبارهم. وأنا أغفر لذلك ذنوبهم ولا أذكرهم بعدها بخطاياهم". وقد صدق وعد الله وازدرع حبه في قلوب هذه الأمة، صغارها وكبارها، وأنطق ألسنتهم بشرائعه وتحاميده، فكل<sup>3</sup> عارف بالله مؤمن به، فتياتهم وفتياتهم، عبيدهم وأرقاؤهم، فلا ترى زراعاً ولا ملاحاً ولا سائساً ولا كئاساً، ولا صغيراً ولا كبيراً، إلا وهو يقرأ شيئاً من القرآن طاهراً، ويحسن يصلي صلاته وحده، ويوحّد الله ويكبّره تكبيراً. ولذلك<sup>4</sup> ستمّاهم الله شعبه وارتضاهم لنفسه. فلن تجب هذه المعاني لأحد سواهم، والله ذو فضلٍ على العالمين.

وقال في الفصل الحادي والثلاثين: "يقول الربّ إني كاسر قوس عيلم، رأس عزّهم وجبروتهم، وأغري بعيلم أربعة أرواح من أربع جهات السماء، وأبدد أهلها في تلك الجهات كلّها حتى لا تبقى<sup>5</sup> أمة إلا وفيها نفر من شذاب عيلم وشذارهم، وأفصّ عيلم قدام أعدائهم فضاً وأفلهم أمام من يريد أنفسهم فلا، وأنزل عليهم البلاء والرجز الأليم، وأرسل عليهم السيف حتى أفنيهم، وأنصب كرسيّ بعيلم، وأبید من هناك من الملوك والسلاطين، هذا قول الربّ".

يبقى 5C: لذلك 4C and D: وكل 3C and D: محرب 2C and D: محرب 1C and D:

In Chapter 4 he says, 'I will rouse up against you from afar, people of Israel, a mighty nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose tongue is unknown, and all of them are warlike and mighty.'<sup>299</sup> The mighty nation is this, whose tongue and language the People of Israel did not know, and all of them are warlike and mighty. And they are the possessors of the new language which God refers to on the tongue of the prophet Zephaniah (peace be upon him).<sup>300</sup>

In Chapter 19 he says, 'After these days I will place my law in their mouths and write it on their hearts, and I will be God to them and they will be people to me. A man will have no need to teach his brother and his neighbour religion and faith, not to say to him, | "Know the Lord". For they will all know him, their young and their old. For this I will forgive them their sins, and after this I will not remind them of their transgressions.'<sup>301</sup> God's promise has proved true and he has planted his love in the hearts of this community, their young and their old, and he has caused their tongues to declare his laws and praises. Each of them knows God and believes in him, their young men and young women, their slaves and their servants. For you will not see a sower, a seaman, a stableman or a sweeper, a child or an adult who does not recite some of the Qur'ān with modesty, perform his prayer in the proper way when he is alone, or proclaim God's oneness and proclaim his greatness. For this, God has named them his people and chosen them for himself. These meanings can never be related to any other than them. God is the giver of favour to all the worlds.

54v

In Chapter 31 he says, 'The Lord says, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their power and might, and I will rouse up against Elam four winds from four parts of heaven, and I will scatter its people through all these parts until there will be no nation without a trace of those cut off and scattered from Elam. I will smash Elam into pieces before their enemies, and I will subdue them utterly before those who seek their very selves. I will bring down upon them affliction and painful suffering, and I will send upon them the sword until I have consumed them. I will set my throne in the midst of Elam and I will wipe out the kings and powerful ones there. This is the word of the Lord.'<sup>302</sup>

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299 Jeremiah 5:15–16.

300 Zephaniah 3:8–10, quoted above.

301 Jeremiah 31:33–34.

302 Jeremiah 49:35–38.

وعيلم هي الأهواز وما والاها، وإنما ذكرها الأنبياء وهم بالشام لأن ملوك فارس  
 55r لما انتقلت عن فارس بنت بالأهواز واستوطنتها، ثم انتقلوا بعد دهر طويل إلى ا  
 السواد. فذكر النبي عليه السلام عيلم لأن اسمها جامع للمملكة كلها، ولم ينزل بها قط<sup>1</sup>  
 من الذلّ الشامل والإستئصال ما نزل في هذه الدولة. فإن ذكر ذاكر الإسكندر  
 وغلبته وتبعاً ومسيره، فإن الذي يحلّ ذلك عنه ويفسّحه ويزيل الشكّ عنه قول  
 الله تبارك اسمه: "إني أنصب كرسي بعيلم"، أي في إقليم بابل، ولم يكن الإسكندر  
 والتبابعة منسوبين إلى الإيمان بالله.

ولهذه النبوة سر آخر عجيب، وذلك أن الله عزّ وجلّ ذكر فيها هذه الدولة العباسية  
 واستيطان الخلفاء من ولد العباس أرض العراق في قوله: "وأنصب كرسي  
 بعيلم"، فضيلة لهم لا يجهلها إلاّ مضعوف. فأما بنو أمية فإنما مسكنهم بالشام.  
 فإن سأل سائل عن الكرسي قلنا هو سلطان الله ونبوته المعمورة بأرض عيلم  
 والعراق وغيرهما من الكور والسواحل والجزائر والآفاق، وما فيها من المساجد  
 والرباطات وما عند أهلها من التكبير والتحميد في كلّ حين وأن من آناء الليل  
 والنهار. وإنما ذكر عيلم لأن الملوك حينئذ كانوا منسوبين إليه كما نسب أهل هذا  
 الإقليم أيام العجم إلى الفرس واليوم إلى العرب لغلبة العرب عليهم. ومصدق  
 قولي أن معنى الكرسي السلطان قول داود النبي عليه السلام: "كرسيك يا الله إلى  
 أبد الآبدين" أي<sup>2</sup> "سلطانك وعزّك".

55v وقال أيضاً في الفصل الثاني والثلاثين مخاطباً للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: <sup>3</sup> "أعدّوا  
 لي آلات الحرب فإنّي أبدد بك الشعوب، وأبدد بك الخليل وفرسانها، وأبدد

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B: إلى, a misreading of the original MS. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم

Elam is Ahwāz and the places it protects. The prophets, who were in Syria, refer to it because when the kings of Persia moved from Persia they settled and came to live in Ahwāz, and then after a long time they moved to | the Sawād.<sup>303</sup> The prophet (peace be upon him) mentions Elam because its name encompasses the whole kingdom. And no utter humiliation or rooting out ever befell them such as has befallen under this empire. For if someone should mention Alexander and his victory or Tubbaʿ and his march,<sup>304</sup> what will disengage this from him, cancel it and eliminate doubt from him are the words of God, blessed be his name, 'I will set up my throne in the midst of Elam', that is in the region of Babylon. And Alexander and the Tabābiʿa were not connected with belief in God. 55r

There is another marvellous mystery in the prophecy, which is that God, great and mighty, refers in it to this 'Abbasid empire and the caliphs from the descendants of al-ʿAbbās coming to live in the land of Iraq in his words 'I will set up my throne in the midst of Elam'. It is high excellence for them, and only the feeble-minded would not know it, for the Umayyads had Syria as their dwelling.<sup>305</sup> And if someone asks about the throne, we say it is the power of God and prophethood from him which thrives in the land of Elam and Iraq, and elsewhere in the villages, coasts, islands and regions and the mosques and hostels there, and the exclamations of God's greatness and praise among their people at all times and hours of the night and day. And he mentions Elam for the reason that at that time the kings were related to it in the way that the people of this region in the days of the Persians were related to Persia and today to the Arabs because of the Arabs' victory over them. And a substantiation of what I say that the meaning of 'the throne' is 'power' are the words of the prophet David (peace be upon him), 'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever',<sup>306</sup> meaning 'your power and might'.

In Chapter 32, addressing the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), he also says, | 'Prepare for me the weapons of war, for by you I will scatter the nations, by you I will scatter the horses and their riders, by you I 55v

303 Ahwāz was founded by the early Sassanians and grew to become the capital of their province of Susiana.

304 Alexander the Great and the Tubbaʿ, a title of the Ḥimyarite kings of pre-Islamic southern Arabia, were proverbial for their great military exploits. Like Alexander, the Tubbaʿ Asʿad Abū Karib led an expedition into Susania, and so might justifiably be thought of as the great destructive force foretold in this prophecy.

305 This identification of the 'Abbasids in the prophecy goes some way to explain the title of the whole work, because it suggests that 'Alī saw all the changes brought about by Islam culminating in this dynasty.

306 Psalm 45:6.

بك المراكب وربكانها، وأبدد بك النساء والرجال والمشايخ والشباب، وأبدد بك<sup>1</sup> أبكار الرجال والنساء، وأبدد بك الراعي وقطيعه،<sup>2</sup> وأبدد بك الأكار وفدانه، وأبدد بك الطغاة والولاة، وأجازي بابل وجميع سكان بلاد الكلدانيين<sup>3</sup> بجميع أوزارهم التي ارتكبوها، هذا قول الرب. وقد أردف الله تلك النبوة المتقدمة التي هي نظيرة هذه ونظيبتها بها. فقد أنزل على بلاد الكلدانيين<sup>4</sup> وإقليم بابل ما أوعدهم، وبدد شملهم، وذلل عزمهم، وأبطل عباداتهم، وانتقم منهم أيما انتقام واصطلمهم أيما اصطلام. ويقال إن ملوك بابل كانوا ينتسبون دهرًا طويلًا إلى كلواذى التي بقرب مدينة السلام.

### نبوة حزقيال النبي على النبي عليهما السلام

قال في الفصل التاسع: "إن أمك مغروسة على الماء بدمك، فهي كالكرمة التي أخرجت ثمارها وأغصانها من مياه كثيرة، وتفرعت منها أغصان كالعصي قوية مشرفة على أغصان الأكابر والسادات، وارتفعت وبسقت أفنانها على غيرهن وحسنت أقدارهن بارتفاعهن والتفات شعبهن.<sup>5</sup> فلم تلبث تلك الكرمة أن قلعت بالسخطة، ورُمي بها على الأرض، وأحرقت السمام ثمارها، وتفرقت قواها، ويبس عصي عرّها، وأتت عليها النار فأكلتها. فعند ذلك غرس غرس في البدو<sup>56r</sup> وفي الأرض المهملة المعطلة العطشى. وخرجت من أغصانه الفاضلة ناراً أكلت ثمار تلك حتى لم يوجد فيها عصاً قوية بعدها ولا قضيب ينهض بأمر السلطان. فن شك أو شغب في النبوة المتقدمة أحمته هذه وأقنعتة، فقد أنبأنا الله تبارك

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit: النساء والرجال والمشايخ والشباب وأبدد بك، presumably owing to dittography.

<sup>2</sup>D omits: وقطيعه وأبدد بك الراعي Reading with C and D; A and B: الكذايين<sup>4</sup> Reading with

C and D; A and B: الكذايين<sup>5</sup> C and D: سعفهن

will scatter the chariots and their drivers, by you I will scatter women, men, the aged and the young, by you I will scatter the first-born man and woman, by you I will scatter the shepherd and his flock, by you I will scatter the ploughman and his ox-pair, by you I will scatter the tyrants and the governors, and I will punish Babylon and all who live in the lands of the Chaldeans for all the crimes they have committed. This is the word of the Lord.<sup>307</sup> God has complemented the preceding prophecy with this, to which it is similar and cognate. For he has brought down on the lands of the Chaldeans and the district of Babylon what he threatened them, he has broken them up, humbled their resolve, destroyed their acts of worship, taken devastating revenge on them, and rooted them out completely. It is said that the kings of Babylon were for a long time connected with Kalwādhā, which is near the City of Peace.<sup>308</sup>

### **The prophecy of the prophet Ezekiel about the Prophet (peace be on them both)**

In Chapter 9 he says, 'Your mother is established on water by your blood, so she is like the vine that has put forth its fruit and branches from much water. The branches have shot out from it like strong boughs towering up over the branches of those who are the great and masters. The kinds they had grew tall and surpassed others, and their lengths were splendid in their height and the entwining of their limbs. But it was not long before the vine was uprooted in anger, and thrown to the ground. The hot winds burnt up its fruit, its strength was dissipated, the boughs of its might grew dry, and fire took hold of them | and consumed them. Then a plant was planted in the desert and in the waste, fallow and parched ground, and from its lofty branches issued fire which consumed the fruit of that until no strong bough was found in it after this, and no rod to execute the command of authority.'<sup>309</sup> Whoever doubts or stirs up trouble over the preceding prophecy, this one will dumbfound him and pacify him. For God, blessed be his name, declares to us that he will pull up the root of the Jews,

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<sup>307</sup> Jeremiah 51:20–24.

<sup>308</sup> The town of Kalwādhā, to the south of Baghdad, was near enough for people to reach it easily from the capital. The absence of any remains of earlier power there in 'Alī's time would come as a fulfilment of this prophecy.

<sup>309</sup> Ezekiel 19:10–14.

اسمه أنه مستأصل شأفة اليهود، ومبير خضراء هم، ومزبل عزهم وجاههم الذي شبهه بالكرمة وبالعصي وبالقضبان. وأتبع ذلك قولاً باهراً يئناً، فأخبر تبارك وتعالى أنه يغرس في البادية والأرض المهملّة العطشى غرساً جديداً، وتخرج أغصانه ناراً تحرق تلك الأخرى حتى لا يوجد فيها عصى قوية أو قضيب<sup>1</sup> ينهض بالسلطان والسياسة. وإنما يعني بالعصى والقضيب السلطان، وقد بطل سلطان اليهود وعزّها من أصل المعمورة، وقامت عصي قوية، بل عصي وقضبان عزيزة، تنهض بسلطان عزيز وسياسة مؤيدة مهذّبة، وتمت بذلك تلك النبوة.

وقال<sup>2</sup> حزقيال عليه السلام في بناء البيت في آخر كتابه إنه أراه الله بيتاً، تولى ملك من الملائكة تخطيطه وتحديدّه، ووصف أركانه وصحونه وأفنيته وأبوابه، وأمره الملك أن يحفظ ذلك ويتدبره. لكنه لما طالّت صفته وجدت القوم قد ثجّوها ولبسوها إما تعمّداً وإما تناسياً، فأضربت عن ذكرها واكتفيت بالكثير الشهير من النبوات. ومن الشواهد على أن<sup>3</sup> صفة ذلك البيت الذي خطّه الله وصوره لحزقيال النبي عليه السلام هو مكمّة لأنها صفة<sup>4</sup> خلاف بيت المقدس الذي بُني بعد الرجعة من سبي بابل. فإن أنكر ذلك منكر، فليوجدنا صفة ذلك البيت الذي بُني ببيت المقدس لنصدّقه، وإلا فليصدّق بما أنبأناه به وبيناه له.

فإن دفع ما قلنا دافع، ومارى ممار، وزعم أن اسم النبي الذي أخرجته من هذه النبوات ليس يلحقه النداء بالسرّانية، فإنّ السرياني إذا نادى يدخل نداءه الياء كما تدخله العرب، فقد قال في التوراة إنه نادى في الفردوس آدم، فقال: "أين أنت آدم؟" يريد: "يا آدم". وخاطب شمعون الصفا اليهود، فقال: "اسمعوا كلامي رجال بني إسرائيل"، أي "يا رجال بني إسرائيل". وقيل في كتاب فراكسيس:

<sup>1</sup>B: وقضيب <sup>2</sup>B: قال <sup>3</sup>B omits this word. <sup>4</sup>C and D omit this word.



will destroy their greenness and will end their might and loveliness, which he likens to the vine, the staves and the rods. He follows this with brilliant and clear words, for he, blessed and mighty, announces that he is planting in the desert and the waste, fallow ground a new plant, whose branches emit fire which burns these others up, so that no strong staff is found in it or rod to execute authority or government. For by staves and rod he must mean authority. And the authority and might of the Jews has been completely eliminated from the world. And a powerful staff has arisen, in fact mighty staves and rods that execute mighty authority and sustained, refined government. In this way the prophecy has been fulfilled.

Ezekiel (peace be upon him) says at the end of his book about the building of the house, that God showed him a house, the tracing and marking of which one of the angels undertook. He described its pillars, courtyards, enclosures and doors, and the angel commanded him to remember this and ponder upon it.<sup>310</sup> However, as his description goes on, I have found that people have blurred and obscured it either deliberately or through forgetfulness. So I have omitted mentioning it and have contented myself with the many well-known prophecies and attestations | to the effect that the description of this house which God traces and outlines through the prophet Ezekiel (peace be upon him) is Mecca, because it is different from the description of Jerusalem, which was built after the return from the Babylonian captivity. And if anyone should deny this, then let him adduce for us the description of this house which was built in Jerusalem, for us to believe him. Otherwise, let him believe what we have declared and set out for him.

56v

If anyone should reject what we have said or dispute it, and should claim that the name of the Prophet I have derived from these prophecies does not have the vocative attached to it in the Syriac, because when a Syrian calls out he includes the vocative 'O', as the Arabs do,<sup>311</sup> well, it says in the Torah that he called to Adam in paradise, saying, 'Where are you, Adam?',<sup>312</sup> meaning, 'O Adam'. Simon Peter spoke to the Jews and said, 'Men from the People of Israel, listen to my speech',<sup>313</sup> that is, 'O men from the People of Israel'. In the Book

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<sup>310</sup> Ezekiel 40:1–47:12.

<sup>311</sup> This real or hypothetical objection, which arises from the Syriac translation of the Bible and not the Hebrew original, points to possible disputes between 'Alī's own former Nestorian co-religionists and Muslims.

<sup>312</sup> Genesis 3:9.

<sup>313</sup> Acts 2:22.

”إنَّ المسيح قال لفولس: شأول شأول لما أقبلت قبلي؟“ أراد: ”يا شأول يا شأول“. ونادى الملك هاجر، وقال: ”هاجر أمة سارة، من أين أقبلت؟“، يريد: ”يا هاجر“. وقال أشعيا: ”زرع إبراهيم خليلي الذي قوّيتك“، يريد: ”يا زرع إبراهيم“.<sup>1</sup> وقال أشعيا: ”احمدي العاقر التي لم تلد“، يريد: ”أيّتها العاقر“. وقال أيضًا: ”الزرع العاقر والولد المفسد رفضتم الربّ وأسخطتم قدّوس إسرائيل“، يريد: ”أيّها الزرع العاقر وأيّها الولد المفسد“. فهذه شواهد كلّها كافية على أنّ النداء بالسريانية لا يكون في أوّله ياء كما في العربية.

57r وأما ما يقوله المماري المعاند منهم إنّ ”مشبّحاً“ ليس هو محمّد، بل ممجد | ومسبح، فإنّه لا يُقال للإنسان: ”إنّك مسبح“ أو ”سبحانك“، وإنّما يُقال ذلك لله عزّ وجلّ، وقد قال كما بيّنت في عدّة نبّوات: ”يا محمّد“. ويُقال لمن أنكر ذلك وأراد تلييسه: ”قلّ بالسريانية الحمد لله“. فإنّه لا يترجمه ويعبره إلّا بقوله: ”شوبحا لآلاها“. فإذا كان شوبحا ”الحمد“ فشوبحا هو ”محمّد“. وقال داوود النّبّي عليه السلام: ”كرسيك الله إلى دهر الدهرين“، يريد: ”يا الله“. وإنّ محكّ وصمّم وزعم أنّ مشبّحاً هو ممجد وليس بمحمّد، فليخبرنا من هذا الممجد الذي قال الله على لسان حبقّوق: ”إنّه انكسفت السماء من بهاء الممجد“ والذي يُسَيّر<sup>3</sup> المنايا أمامه وتصحّب سباع الطير عساكره

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D add: به <sup>3</sup>C and D: تسير

of the Acts it is said, 'Christ said to Paul, "Saul, Saul, why do you press after me?"',<sup>314</sup> meaning, 'O Saul, O Saul'. The angel called to Hagar and said, 'Hagar, Sarah's maid, where have you come from?',<sup>315</sup> meaning, 'O Hagar'. Isaiah says, 'Seed of my friend Abraham, whom I have strengthened',<sup>316</sup> meaning, 'O seed'. And Isaiah says, 'Give praise, barren one, you who have never given birth',<sup>317</sup> meaning, 'O barren one'. He also says, 'Unfertile seed and corrupt children, you have abandoned the Lord and have angered the holy One of Israel',<sup>318</sup> meaning, 'O unfertile seed and O corrupt children'. These are attestations which all convince that the vocative in Syriac does not have 'O' at its start as in Arabic.

As for what the doubting and stubborn people among them say, that *meshubbaḥ* is not *Muḥammad* but *mumajjad* and | *musabbah*, because a human being is not addressed as 'You are praised', or 'Praise be to you', since this is only addressed to God, great and mighty, well, as I have made clear, he says in numerous prophecies, 'O Muḥammad'. So let one who denies this and wants to obscure it be told, 'Say in Syriac, "Praise be to God"', and he will only be able to attempt this and express it by saying, '*Shubḥā li-Ālāhā*'. And if *shubḥā* is 'praise', then *meshubbaḥ* is '*Muḥammad*'<sup>319</sup> And the prophet David (peace be upon him) said, 'Your throne, God, is for ever and ever',<sup>320</sup> meaning by this, 'O God'. But if he is quarrelsome and keeps on claiming that *meshubbaḥ* is *mumajjad* and not *Muḥammad*, then let him tell us who this *Mumajjad* is whom God spoke about on the tongue of Habbakuk, 'The heaven was eclipsed by the splendour of *Mumajjad*', and the one 'who brings on doom, whose armies birds of

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314 Acts 9:4.

315 Genesis 16:8.

316 Isaiah 41:8.

317 Isaiah 54:1.

318 Isaiah 1:4.

319 The real or hypothetical opponents deny the validity of 'Ali's identification of Muḥammad where the original reads *meshubbaḥ*, since this term is only applicable to God and therefore God would not address another being with it. But 'Ali counters that there is no such restriction, because since the Arabic translation of the Syriac *shubḥā* is *ḥamd*, even though this is used in addresses to God, its cognate *meshubbaḥ* can be translated as *Muḥammad*.

320 Psalm 45:6. Mingana, p. 131, n. 2, regards this quotation as out of place because it is another example of forms of address 'Ali has listed above, in which the vocative particle 'O' must be understood. He suggests that 'this induces us to suppose that the present MS. is a transcript from a first draft in the author's autograph'. A plausible alternative is to assume that 'Ali's train of thought is largely focused on this question of restrictions in forms of address used by God, as these opponents claim. He uses this verse to show that there is no such restriction, because God actually addresses another being as 'God' (though, of course, Christians would understand it as the Father speaking to the Son; Hebrews 1:8).

والذي "ارتوت السهام بأمره وسارت العساكر في بريق سهامه ولمعان نيازكه" والذي "دوّخ الأمم، وظهر لخلاص شعبه، وللطلب بتراث آبائه"، والذي قال داوود: "إنّه يصليّ عليه في كلّ وقت ويبارك عليه في كلّ يوم"، وهو قول الأمم: "اللهم صلّ على محمد وآل محمد وبارك على محمد وآل محمد"، والذي قال فيه أشعيا النبي: "إنّي جعلتك شاهداً للأمم وسلطاناً ومدبراً للشعوب"، وهو قول الأمم: "أشهد أنّ لا إله إلا الله وأنّ محمداً رسول الله". أو من الممجّد الذي يقول الله على لسان أشعيا: "إنّي جعلتُ لك اسماً محمداً، فانظر من مساكنك يا قدّوس ويا محمد". فإنّ كان عنيّ به الممجّد، فمنّ هذا الممجّد غير محمد؟ وفي هذا تنبيه وتصريح وتقويم لمن أراد الله سعادته وتقويمه.

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### نبوة دانيال النبيّ على النبيّ عليهما السلام

مؤكّدة للتي تقدّمت من نبوة<sup>1</sup> حزقيال وغيره وتحقيق قولنا إنّ النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>2</sup> هو خاتم الأنبياء، وإنّ غلبته كانت من عند الله، وإنّّه صاحب الدولة المؤيّدّة التي لا دولة بعدها ولا أمة مثل أمته، وإنّ جميع ما قدّمنا في نبوّات الأنبياء هو فيه وله، لا في غيره.

ما نجد في نبوة دانيال النبيّ عليه السلام في الفصل الأوّل من كتابه فإنّه قال لبختنصر<sup>3</sup> حين سأله عن تعبير رؤيا كان رآها من غير أن يقصّها عليه، فقال دانيال بروح القدس: "نعم رأيت أيّها الملك صنماً عظيماً بارع الجمال جداً وهو قائم بين

وكان ظهوره: <sup>3A</sup> note in the same hand in the margin of A reads: صلعم <sup>2B:</sup> نبوات <sup>1B and C:</sup>

سنة ٣٣٩٦ ... نقل من تقويم التاريخ

prey accompany', 'at whose command the arrows were quenched' and 'in the glint of whose arrows the armies marched and in the flashing of his lances', who 'conquered the nations' and 'appeared for the salvation of his people and for the demand of his fathers' inheritance';<sup>321</sup> about whom David said, 'Prayer will be made for him at all times and blessing invoked upon him every day'<sup>322</sup>—this is the words of the nations, 'O God, give blessing to Muḥammad and to the Family of Muḥammad, and make Muḥammad and the Family of Muḥammad blessed'; and the one about whom the prophet Isaiah said, 'I have made you a witness to the nations and an authority and leader to the peoples'<sup>323</sup>—this is the words of the nations, 'I witness there is no god other than God, and Muḥammad is the messenger of God'; or who is the *Mumajjad* about whom God says on the tongue of Isaiah, 'I have made for you a name that is praised, *Muḥammad*. So look from your dwellings, O holy one, *O Muḥammad*'?<sup>324</sup> If by this he had meant *Mumajjad*, then who is this *Mumajjad* other than Muḥammad? In this there is information, clarification and correction to those for whom God wills his success and correction.

**The prophecy of the prophet Daniel about the Prophet (peace be upon them),**

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corroborating the prophecy of Ezekiel and others that are above, and confirming our words that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) is the Seal of the Prophets, that his triumph was from God, that his is the authorised empire after which there is no empire nor any nation like his nation, and that all the prophecies of the prophets we have given above are about him and for him and about no other.

What we find in the prophecy of the prophet Daniel (peace be upon him) in the first chapter of his book is that he said to Nebuchadnezzar when he asked him the meaning of a vision he had seen, without relating it to him, Daniel speaking through the Holy Spirit, 'Indeed, O king, you saw a mighty statue, most skilfully fashioned in beauty, standing directly before you. Its head was of

<sup>321</sup> Habakkuk 3:2–12.

<sup>322</sup> Psalm 72:15.

<sup>323</sup> Isaiah 49:8.

<sup>324</sup> Isaiah 63:15.

يديك، رأسه من الذهب الإبريز الخالص، وساعده من الفضة، وبطنه ونخذه من النحاس، وساقاه حديد، وبعض رجليه حديد وبعضها خرف. ورأيت حجراً انقطع من غير قاطع، وصكّ رجلي ذلك الصنم ودقهما دقاً شديداً، فتفتت الصنم كله حديده ونحاسه وفضته وذهبه، وصارت رفاتاً مثل دقاق الجل<sup>1</sup> في البيادر، وعصفت به الرياح فلم ير له أثر. وصار ذلك الحجر الذي صكّ ذلك الصنم جبلاً عالياً امتلأت منه الأرض كلها.

فهذه رؤياك أيها الملك، وأنت الرأس الذي رأيت من الذهب، وتقوم بعدك مملكة أخرى دونك. والمملكة الثالثة التي تشبه النحاس تتسلط على الأرض كلها. والمملكة الرابعة تكون قوية مثل الحديد، وكما أنّ الحديد يدقّ كل شيء كذلك هي تسحق الكلّ. فأما الرجل التي كان بعضها من حديد وبعضها من خرف، فإنّ بعض المملكة يكون عزيزاً وبعضها ذليلاً، وتكون كلمة المملكة متشتتة.

ويقيم إله السماء في تلك الأيام<sup>2</sup> ملكاً دائماً أبدياً لا يتغيّر ولا يزول، ولا يذر لغيره من الأمم ملكاً ولا سلطاناً، بل يدقّ ويبيد المملكات كلها، ويقوم هو إلى دهر الداهرين.

فهذا تعبير الحجر الذي رأيت أنّه انقطع من جبل بلا قاطع حتى دقّ الحديد والنحاس والخرف. فإنّ الله الكبير أعلمك ما يكون في آخر الزمان.

فهذه نبوة مبشرة وإشارة منورة، لا حاجة بها إلى عبارة أكثر من عبارة دانيال النبي عليه السلام، فقد صحّ النبوات كلها وشهد بأنها كلّها في محمد عليه السلام لا في غيره، وأخبر بأنّ آخر الدول والملوك هي الدولة التي يقيمها إله السماء وأنها

<sup>1</sup>A note in the same hand in the margin of A reads: والمراد به: هو باقي قصب الزرع بعد الحصاد،

<sup>2</sup>B omits this word. التبن.

refined, pure gold, its forearm of silver, its belly and thigh of copper, its legs of iron and part of its feet iron and part earthenware. And you saw a stone that was cut without a cutter; it struck the feet of this statue and crushed them utterly, so that the whole statue, its iron, copper, silver and gold, broke into pieces, and it became remnants like the powder of husks on the threshing floors. The winds blew it away and no trace of it could be seen. This stone which struck the statue became a tall mountain and the whole earth was filled with it.

‘This was your vision, O king. You are the head of gold that you saw. And after you another kingdom lesser than yours will be established, and a third kingdom which is like copper will have rule over the whole earth. A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron, and just as iron crushes all | things, so it will wipe out everything. Concerning the foot, part of which was iron and part earthenware, well, part of the kingdom will be powerful and part will be humble, and the authority of the kingdom will be shattered.

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‘In those days the God of heaven will establish an eternal, everlasting kingdom which will not be changed and will not come to an end, and will not disperse dominion or rule to other nations, but will crush and destroy all the kingdoms, and it will stand for ever and ever.

‘This then is the meaning of the stone that you saw was cut from a mountain without a cutter, until it crushed the iron, the copper and the earthenware. For the great God has informed you of what will be at the end of time.’<sup>325</sup>

This is a prophecy of good omen and a shining reference that has no need of any explanation further to the prophet Daniel’s explanation (peace be upon him). For he has certified all the prophecies and testified that they are all about Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and not about any other. He has announced that the last of the empires and kingdoms is the empire that the God of heaven

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325 Daniel 2:31–45.

تحتوي على مملكات الأرض كلّها وتقوم إلى دهر الداهرين، ولا تذر لغيرها ملكاً ولا سلطاناً إلا دقته وهشمته. ولذلك سُمِّيَ مُحَمَّدُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ<sup>1</sup> خاتم الأنبياء لأنه إليه انتهت النبوات كلّها كما ترون، وبه تمت البشارات المتقدمة كما تجدون وتقرأون. فلا يوجد بعده نبوة نبي، ولا نازل وحى، فقد أخبر أنه لا دولة ولا سلطان بعد دولته وزمانه، فأَيُّ مقال يبقى وضلال يثبت مع هذه النبوة؟ وما حجة من بحدها عند الله؟ أو هل جزاؤه عنده إلا العذاب والنار؟ لأن الله أخبر أن إله السماء يقيم هذه المملكة الدائمة الأبدية.

58v وقال دانيال عليه السلام في الفصل الرابع ما آيد به النبوة الأولى وأكدها، قال: "رأيتُ في المنام كأنّ الرياح الأربع هاجت، واصطكّ منها البحر العظيم واعتلج اعتلاجاً شديداً، وصعد من البحر أربع حيوانات عظام مختلفة الصور، أولها الأسد وله أجنحة النسر، ورأيتُ جناحه قد تمرط، فانتصب قائماً على الأرض مثل إنسان، وجعل له قلب إنسان. والحيوان الثاني مثل الدب، وهو قائم ناحية وفي فمه ثلاثة أضلاع. وسمعتُ قائلاً يقول له: "قم فكل من<sup>2</sup> اللحم واستكثر منه". والحيوان الثالث مثل النمر وفي جنبه أربعة أجنحة مثل أجنحة الطير، له أربعة رؤوس، وأُعطي سلطاناً. ورأيتُ حيواناً رابعاً، عظيماً قوياً عزيزاً جداً، وله أسنان عظام من حديد. فهو يأكل ويدق ويدوس برجليه ما بقي، ورأيتُه مخالفاً لتلك الحيوانات الأخرى، وكانت له عشرة قرون. وكنت أفهم معنى قرونها<sup>3</sup> تلك. ولم يلبث أن نجم قرن صغير من بين تلك القرون، فنصل وسقط من بين يديّ ذلك القرن الصغير ثلاثة قرون من مقاديمها.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>3</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: قرونها



will establish, that it will possess all the realms of the earth and that it will stand for ever and ever and will not leave any other kingdom or rule without crushing it and destroying it. For this reason the Prophet Muḥammad (may God bless him and give him peace) is called the Seal of the Prophets, because with him all prophecies end, as you have seen, and in him earlier good tidings have been fulfilled, as you find and read. For after him there is no prophet's prophecy nor any revelation coming down, for he has declared that there will be no empire or authority after his empire and era. So what claim remains or error persists alongside this prophecy? And what could be the pretext before God of the person who resists it, or what could be his recompense from him except punishment and hell? For God announces that the God of heaven is establishing this everlasting and eternal realm.<sup>326</sup>

In Chapter 4 Daniel (peace be upon him) says in support and confirmation of the first prophecy: 'I saw in the dream that the four winds had arisen, and because of them the great sea surged and heaved with excessive violence. And from the sea arose four great beasts with different forms. The first of them was like a lion and it had the wings of an eagle, and I saw that its wing was plucked. Then it rose up, standing on the earth like a man, and it was given the heart of a man. The second beast was like a bear and it was standing to one side, and in its mouth were three ribs. And I heard someone say to it, "Arise, devour from the flesh, keep doing it". The third beast was like a leopard and on its sides were four wings like the wings of a bird. It had four heads, and it was given authority. And I saw a fourth great beast standing in sheer might, with great teeth of iron. It was eating and crushing, and trampling with its feet everything that remained. And I saw that it was different from the other beasts. It had ten horns, and I understood the meaning of these horns of it. And presently a small horn appeared among these horns, and then before this small horn three of the preceding horns fell out and dropped down.

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326 Daniel 2:45.

فأحببت<sup>1</sup> أن أعرف تأويل الحيوان الرابع الذي كان مخالفاً لمن كلهنّ ما هو وما<sup>2</sup>  
تأويل قرونه العشرة وأسنانه التي من الحديد ومخالبه وبرائنه التي من النحاس،  
وما تأويل أكله ودقه ودوسه برجله ما بقي، وتعبير القرن الصغير الذي ارتفع  
منه، ونصول القرون الثلاثة وسقوطها بين يديه، وما كان لقرنه هذا من العيون.  
59r وسمعتُ هذا القرن يتكلم بفيه كلاماً جهيراً، وكان منجم ذلك القرن الصغير  
ومنبته وقدره أجلّ من أقدار سائر تلك القرون، وكان ينازع القديسين الأطهار  
فيقاومهم.

فقال لي الربّ: "إنّ تأويل الحيوان الرابع مملكة رابعة تكون في الأرض، وتكون  
أجلّ وأفضل من جميع المملكات، تغلب على الأرض كلّها وتدوسها وتدقّها  
وتأكلها رغداً. فأما عبارة القرون العشرة، فإنّها تقوم من تلك المملكة عشرة  
أملاك، ويقوم من بعدهم ملك آخر أجلّ وأعظم من الأولين ويدلّ ثلاثة  
أملاك."

وهذه أيضاً مفسّرة منوّرة لا تحتاج إلى إفصاح ولا إيضاح أكثر ممّا فسّره دانيال  
عليه السلام، فالحيوان الرابع الذي قال إنّّه كان عظيماً رائعاً هائلاً قوياً عزيزاً  
هو تمثال هذه المملكة التي قال الله إنّها أعظم المملكات وأجلّها، وإنّها تغلب  
على الأرض كلّها وتدوسها بأقدامها وتأكلها رغداً، وهي آخر الدول. وهذه أيضاً  
تشهد بأنّ النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> آخر الأنبياء وخاتمهم وأنّ النبوات كلّها تمت  
به وتناهت عنده ولم تتجاوزه، وعلى هذا دلّت النبوات المتقدّمة وإليه<sup>4</sup> ساقّت.

والإيا: Reading with C and D; A and B: صلعم<sup>3</sup> B: هو<sup>2</sup> C and D add: (wrongly). فأجبت: 1C:

“Then I desired to know the explanation of the fourth beast which was different from all the others, what it was and what was the explanation of its ten horns and its teeth which were of iron, and its claws and talons which were of copper, and what was the explanation of its eating and crushing, and trampling what remained with its foot, and the interpretation of the small horn which rose up from it and the falling and dropping of the three horns | before it, and why this horn had eyes. And I heard this horn speaking out loudly with its mouth. And the appearing of this small horn and its growing and size were greater than the sizes of all the other horns. And it struggled against the pure, holy ones, and fought them.

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“Then the Lord said to me, “The explanation of the fourth beast is a fourth realm that will be on earth, and it will be greater and finer than all realms. It will subdue the whole earth, and will trample, crush and consume it at will. And the interpretation of the ten horns is that from this realm will rise up ten kings, and after them will rise up another king greater and mightier than the earlier ones, and he will subdue three kings.”<sup>327</sup>

This is also interpreting and shining, with no need of any elaboration or clarification more than the interpretation of Daniel (peace be upon him) gave it. For the fourth beast, which he said was powerful, awesome, dreadful, strong and mighty, is a metaphor for this realm which God said would be the most powerful and greatest of the realms, that it would subdue the whole earth, would stamp upon it with its feet and would consume it without restraint. It is the last of the empires, and this too testifies that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) is the last of the prophets and their Seal, and that all the prophecies are fulfilled in him, come to an end with him and do not go beyond him. The earlier prophecies prove this and culminate with him. So

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327 Daniel 7:2–8, 19–24.

فسبحان مَنْ قَدَّرَ ذلكَ وأنبأ به العباد على ألسنة أنبيائه قبل كونه بدهر طويل وأوجب به الحجَّةَ وقوى به البصائر النافذة ورفع الأستار الممدودة.<sup>1</sup>

59v فهذه نبوات الأنبياء | من بني إسرائيل. فأما ما تنبأ به المسيح عليه السلام ومن بعده من حواريه فإنِّي ذاكره، فقد أشاروا إلى زمن النبي عليه السلام إشارة وأوحوا إليه إيحاء. وقال مَنْ فسر كتب<sup>2</sup> النصارى إنَّ الحيوان الأوَّل هو دولة أهل بابل كما قال دانيال،<sup>3</sup> والثاني دولة أهل الماهين، والثالث دولة الفرس، والرابع إذا دولة العرب لا شك فيه، وهي الدولة الأبدية التي قال الله<sup>4</sup> إنها لا تزول ولا تدع لغيرها دولة ولا سلطاناً، وهذا تحقيق قول موسى النبي عليه السلام عن الله في إسماعيل عليه السلام: "إنِّي باركتُ عليه وعظَّمته جداً جداً".

ووجدت<sup>5</sup> في كتب دانيال نبوة أيضاً باهرة عجيبة فإنه يقول: "طوبى لمن أمل أن يدرك الأيام الألف والثلاثمائة والخمسة وثلاثين". فأعملتُ فيه الفكر فوجدته يوحى إلى هذا الدين وهذه الدولة العباسية خاصة، وذلك أنه لا يخلو دانيال من أن يكون أراد بهذا العدد الأيام أو الشهور<sup>6</sup> أو السنين<sup>7</sup> أو سراً من أسرار النبوة يُخرجه

<sup>1</sup>C and D: المهرودة (wrongly). <sup>2</sup>B: كتاب <sup>3</sup>B adds: عليه السلام <sup>4</sup>B adds: تعالى <sup>5</sup>C and D:

فوجدتُ <sup>6</sup>B, C and D: والشهور <sup>7</sup>C and D: والسنين (wrongly).

praise to the One who ordained this, made it known to humans on the tongues of his prophets a long time before it had being, laid down binding proof through it, gave strength to spent vision through it and removed the stretched coverings.

These are prophecies of the prophets | from the People of Israel. And I shall mention what Christ (peace be upon him) and his disciples after him announced, for they definitely pointed to the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and made clear allusion to him.<sup>328</sup> Those who have interpreted the books of the Christians have said that the first beast was the empire of the Babylonians, as Daniel says, the second was the empire of the Medes, and the third the empire of the Persians. And the fourth is therefore the empire of the Arabs, without doubt about it, and this is the everlasting empire which God said would not come to an end or yield empire or authority to any other.<sup>329</sup> This is a confirmation of the prophet Moses' (peace be upon him) words from God about Ishmael (peace be upon him), 'I have given him my blessing and made him exceedingly great.'<sup>330</sup>

59v

In the books of Daniel I have also found a splendid, marvellous prophecy. For he says, 'Blessed is the one who hopes to see one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.'<sup>331</sup> I applied my mind to this, and I discovered that it refers specifically to this religion and this 'Abbasid empire.'<sup>332</sup> This is because by this number Daniel could only have intended days or months or years or some prophetic secret that mathematics can extract. If someone should say that he

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328 This sentence has the definite appearance of a conclusion to the Old Testament prophecies and a brief introduction to the New Testament prophecies. It makes the continuing discussion of Daniel's prophecy something of an afterthought, and its position after this short paragraph supports the view that the present text is an unfinished draft.

329 In a succession of Christian apocalyptic writings that can be tentatively dated from the mid-7th century onwards, this fourth beast is usually identified as Islam and seen as the sign of the end time which is destined finally to be overcome by a resurgent Christian power (see D. Thomas et al. (eds), *Christian-Muslim Relations, a Bibliographical History*, vol. 1 (600–900), Leiden, 2009, pp. 141–143, 164–166, 239–241, 275–276, 309–311, 414–416, 600–602). Needless to say, 'Alī shows no acknowledgement of such interpretations, but gives his own interpretation of this fourth beast as the power of Islam come as the climax of God's eternal plan. In what he goes on to say, he evidently regards the 'Abbasid dynasty as its fulfilment, clearly predicted by Daniel.

330 Genesis 17:20.

331 Daniel 12:12.

332 'Alī understandably emphasises the importance of Daniel's prediction of the 'Abbasid dynasty, because it is both a sign of the eternally planned outcome of history and the justification of his own conversion to Islam.

الحساب. فإن قال قائل إنه أراد به الأيام، فإنه لم يحدث لبني إسرائيل ولا في العالم بعد أربع سنين فرح ولا حادثة سارة، ولا بعد ألف وثلثمائة وخمس وثلثين شهراً، فإن ذلك مائة وإحدى عشرة سنة وأشهر.

60r فإن قالوا عني به السنين، فإنما ينتهي ذلك إلى هذه الدولة لأن زمن دانيال إلى المسيح نحو من خمسمائة سنة، ومصدق ذلك ما أوحى إليه أنه يأتي عليه وعلى قومه سبعون سابوعاً في السبي ثم يرجعون إلى بيت المقدس ويبعث المسيح، ومن المسيح إلى سنتنا هذه ثمانمائة وسبع وستون سنة، ينتهي ذلك إلى هذه الدولة العباسية منذ ثلاثين سنة أو يزيد شيئاً.

فإن قال قائل إنه ليس بسنين أيضاً بل سر من أسرار النبوة يخرج الحساب، فإنني فكرت فيه فوجدت عدد هذه الأيام مساوياً لما يجتمع من عدد حروف محمد خاتم الأنبياء مهدي ماجد، فإنه إذا جمع حروف هذه الألفاظ بحساب الجمل، خرج منها ما بينا وهي خمسة أسماء.

فإن قال<sup>1</sup> قائل قد يحتمل هذا العدد أن يخرج لغيره بمثل ما أخرجته له، فإن الذي يشهد بصحة ما قلت ويوجب هذا السر للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>2</sup> شهادة دانيال وغيره له بما قد بينت. فن أخرج على اسم من الأسماء عليه من شهادات الأنبياء ما على النبي عليه السلام وافقناه فيه، ولن يمكنه ذلك أبداً. وقد نسب قوم من النصارى هذا العدد إلى المسيح بمثل ما حسبت فعارضتهم، وأوضحت بشهادات الأنبياء أن النبي عليه السلام أولى به.

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم

intended by it days, well no gladness or joyful event occurred for the People of Israel or the world after four years, nor after one thousand three hundred and thirty-five months, for this is one hundred and eleven years and some months.

But if they say that he meant years, | this comes up to this empire, because the period from Daniel to Christ was about five hundred years. The confirmation of this is what was revealed to him that seventy weeks would be completed for him and for his people in the captivity, and then they would return to Jerusalem and Christ would be sent.<sup>333</sup> And from Christ to this year of ours is eight hundred and sixty-seven years,<sup>334</sup> coming up to this 'Abbasid empire thirty years ago, or a little more.<sup>335</sup>

6or

But if someone says that it is not years either, but some prophetic secret that mathematics can extract, well I have thought about it and discovered that the number of these days is the same as the number of letters added together in 'Muḥammad, Seal of the Prophets, guided one, illustrious one' [*Muḥammad, khatam al-anbiyā', mahdī, mājīd*]. For if the letters of these words are added together according to their numerical value, what we have made clear emerges from them, and they are five names.

If someone should say that this number permits extraction for someone other than him, just as I have extracted it for him, well what testifies to the correctness of what I have said and indubitably connects this secret to the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) is the testimony of Daniel and others to him, as I have made clear. So someone might extract from it some name from the testimonies of the prophets and not the Prophet (peace be upon him), and we would agree with him, though he will never be able to do this. People from the Christians have related this number to Christ in the way that I have done, but I have refuted them and made clear from the testimonies of the prophets that the Prophet (peace be upon him) has greater claim to it.

333 Daniel 9:24–25.

334 'Ali has made clear at the beginning of the work that he wrote it during the reign of al-Mutawakkil, who was assassinated in 861.

335 As Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 138, n. 2, points out, according to 'Ali's computation, there were  $500 + 867 = 1367$  years between the time of Daniel and his own time, making a difference of 32 years from Daniel's 1335 years.

## نبوة المسيح على النبي صلى الله عليهما وسلم

قال المسيح عليه السلام في ذلك ما هو مقيّد مَخْدَد<sup>1</sup> في كتاب يوحنا التلميذ في الفصل الخامس عشر من إنجيله: "إِنَّ الفارقليط روح الحق الذي يرسله أبي بإسمي يعلمكم كلّ شيء".<sup>2</sup> | فالفارقليط الذي أرسله الله بعد المسيح مصدّقاً لإسم المسيح عليه السلام هو الذي علّم الناس كلّ شيء لم يكونوا علموه من قبل. ولم يكن في تلامذة المسيح إلى دهرنا<sup>3</sup> هذا أحد علّم الناس شيئاً غير الذي كان علّمهم المسيح. فالفارقليط الذي علّم الناس ما لم يكونوا يعلمونه هو النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.<sup>4</sup> والقرآن هو العلم الذي سمّاه المسيح "كلّ شيء".

وقال يوحنا عنه في الفصل السادس عشر: "إِنَّ الفارقليط لن<sup>4</sup> يجيئكم ما لم أذهب، فإذا جاء وبخّ العالم على الخطيئة، ولا يقول من تلقاء نفسه شيئاً لكنه يسوسكم بالحق كله ويخبركم بالحوادث والغيوب". وقال يوحنا عنه: "إِنِّي سائل أبي أن يرسل إليكم فارقليطاً آخر يكون معكم إلى الأبد. فأما تأويل قوله: "إِنَّه يرسله بإسمي" فإنه لما سُمّي المسيح بفارقليط، وسُمّي محمد بهذا الإسم لم ينكر من المسيح قوله: "إِنَّه يرسله بإسمي" أي "يكون سميّ". فقل ما يوجد ذكر المسيح عليه السلام في باب من كتب الأنبياء عليهم السلام إلا كان ذكر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> متصلاً به، يتلوه ويشفعه لأنّه جاء بعده.

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>A note written in a different hand in the margin of A reads: وهو تاريخ

<sup>3</sup>B: جلوس جعفر المتوكل سنة ٢٣٢ وإلى انتهاء سلطنته وموته شهيداً سنة ٢٤٧. موسى المولوي

صلعم <sup>4</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: آن (sic). <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم



### The prophecy of Christ about the Prophet (may God bless them and give them peace)

What Christ (peace be upon him) said about this is written down and preserved in the Book of the disciple John, in Chapter 15 of his Gospel: ‘The Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, whom my Father will send in my name will teach you all things.’<sup>336</sup> | Now the Paraclete whom God will send after Christ, giving confirmation to the name of Christ (peace be upon him), is the one who taught people all that they did not know before. But among the disciples of Christ to this day of ours there has never been one who has taught people anything other than Christ had taught them. So the Paraclete who would teach people what they did not know is the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and the Qur’ān is the knowledge that Christ calls ‘all things’.

60v

John says about him in Chapter 16: ‘The Paraclete will not come to you unless I go away. And when he has come, he will rebuke the world for sin. He will not speak a thing from his own self, but he will direct you in all the truth and will inform you about what is to take place and what is hidden.’<sup>337</sup> And John said about him, ‘I will ask my Father to send you another Paraclete who will be with you for ever.’<sup>338</sup> The explanation of his words, ‘He will send him in my name’, is that since Christ was called Paraclete and Muḥammad was called by this name, Christ’s words ‘He will send him in my name’, meaning ‘he will be my namesake’, cannot be denied. Mention of Christ (peace be upon him) is rarely to be found in any place in the books of the prophets (peace be upon them) unless there is a mention of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) accompanying it, following it and attached to it, because he came after him.

336 John 14:26. By the time ‘Alī was writing, the identification of the references in John’s Gospel to the Paraclete as Muḥammad would have been a common element in Muslim apologetic. Ibn Ishāq had already made the connection in the mid-eighth century (*Sīra*, pp. 149–150/trans. pp. 103–104), as did the Caliph al-Mahdī a few decades later in his debate with the Patriarch Timothy I (Mingana, ‘Apology’, pp. 169–171), while in ‘Alī’s own time it was mentioned by Ibn Qutayba (*Dalā’il al-nubuwwa*; see Schmidtke, ‘The Muslim reception of biblical materials’, p. 256). The connection is also made in an anonymous Christian work in Syriac, *‘Eltā d-mawteḥ d-Muḥammad* (‘The affair of the death of Muḥammad’), which can tentatively be dated to the eighth or ninth century (see *CMR* 1, p. 401).

337 John 16:7, 8, 13, with verses in the passage that might weaken the case omitted.

338 John 14:16.

ووجدت للفارقليط سرّاً آخر عجباً وهو أنّي لما أعملت فيه<sup>1</sup> الفكر وفليت عن معنى قول المسيح وجدت ما يجتمع من حروفه إذا حسبه الحاسب بحساب<sup>2</sup> الجمل مساوياً لما يجتمع من حروف محمد بن عبد الله النبي الهادي. فإن قال قائل: "إنه ينقص عدداً واحداً لأنّ اللفظة إنما هي فارقليط"، فإنّ الألف زيادة في 61r أسماء السريانيين على أنّ الذي يساويه من العدد حتى لا يزيد ولا ينقص: "محمد رسول حبيب طيب". فإنّ قال قائل: "قد يمكن إستخراج هذا الحساب بغير هذه الأسماء"، لم يجب<sup>3</sup> ذلك له حتى يحضرنا من شهادة من هو كالمسيح في قوله: "إنّ الفارقليط الذي يرسله روح الحقّ الذي يرسله أبي بإسمي هو يعلمكم<sup>4</sup> كل شيء"، ولن يجد إلى ذلك سبيلاً.

وقال يوحنا التلميذ في رسالته<sup>5</sup> في كتاب فراكسيس وهو أخبار الحواريين: "لا تؤمنوا يا أحبائي بكلّ روح، بل ميزوا الأرواح التي من عند الله، واعلموا أنّ كلّ روح تؤمن بأنّ يسوع المسيح قد جاء وكان جسدياً فهو من عند الله، وكلّ روح لا تؤمن بأنّ المسيح كان جسدياً فليس من عند الله". وقد آمن النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>7</sup> بأنّ المسيح قد جاء وأنّه جسديّ وأنّه روح الله وكلمته ألقاها إلى مريم. فروحه إذاً بشهادة يوحنا وغيره روح صادقة برة من عند الله عزّ وجلّ، ودوخ<sup>8</sup> من زعم أنّه غير جسديّ ولا إنسيّ من عند غير الله.

في يعتّمهم<sup>5</sup> B omits: 4B: يعتمّمهم (wrongly). 3C and D: بالحساب 2A, B, C and D: من 1B adds: رسالته 6C and D: يؤمن (wrongly). 7B: صلعم 8The following phrase (which appears in the body of the text in B, p. 123) is added in the margin of A by a different hand: أنّه ودوخ من زعم أنّه غير جسديّ ولا إنسيّ من عند غير الله

I found another amazing secret about 'Paraclete', for when I applied my mind to it and examined the meaning of Christ's words, I found that if someone adds the total of its letters together according to their numerical value it is equal to the total of the letters 'Muḥammad son of 'Abd Allāh, prophet, guide' [*Muḥammad bin 'Abd Allāh, al-nabī al-hādī*]. If someone says that it lacks one number because the word | is actually Paracleta, well the 'a' is additional in Syriac names, although what would be the same as it in number without exceeding or lacking is 'Muḥammad, messenger, beloved, accepted' [*Muḥammad rasūl, ḥabīb, ṭayyib*]. If someone says, 'This total could be extracted from names other than this', he cannot do this until he brings before us evidence of who is like Christ in his words, 'The Paraclete whom he will send, the Spirit of truth whom my Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things', and he will not find a means for this.

61r

John the disciple says in his letter in the Book of the Acts, which is the reports of the disciples,<sup>339</sup> 'My beloved, do not believe in every spirit, but distinguish the spirits that are from God, and know that every spirit that believes that Jesus Christ has come and was corporeal is from God, and every spirit that does not believe that Christ was corporeal is not from God.'<sup>340</sup> The Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) believed that Christ had come and was corporeal, and was God's spirit and word which he cast into Mary.<sup>341</sup> So, according to the testimony of John and others, his spirit was a truthful and virtuous spirit from God, great and mighty, and a spirit that claims that he was not corporeal and not human is from another than God.<sup>342</sup>

339 In the Greek and Eastern Christian traditions, the New Testament Epistles are included with Acts under a single heading.

340 1John 4:1–3.

341 Q 4:171.

342 Here 'Alī reveals the difference between his own Muslim concern, that the corporeal must exclude the divine, and that of the writer of 1John, that the divine and corporeal were both really present in Christ.

وقال شمعون الصفا رأس الخواريين في كتاب فراكسيس: "إنَّه قد حان أنْ يبتدأ الحكم ابتداءً من بيت الله". وتفسير ذلك أنْ بيت الله الذي ذكره الخواري هو مَكَّة، وفيها كان ابتداء الحكم الجديد لا من غيرها. فإنْ قال قائل: "إنَّه عني به حكم اليهود، فقد كان المسيح أخبرهم: "إنَّه لا يُترك بيت<sup>1</sup> المقدس حجر على حجر حتى يُنسف ويبقى على الخراب إلى يوم القيامة". فقد وضح أنْ الحكم الجديد الذي ذكره الخواري هو دين الإسلام وحكمه،<sup>2</sup> وذلك شبيهه بقول صفنيا النبي عليه السلام عن الله إنَّه مجدّد للأمم لغة مختارة. فكانت العربية<sup>3</sup> اللغة الجديدة المختارة للحكم والدين الجديد.

وقد قال دانيال النبي عليه السلام في هذا المعنى ما قد بيناه، ولم يكن حينئذ بيت منسوب إلى الله سوى مَكَّة فيتعلّق به المخالف ويقول إنَّ الحكم ابتداءً منه. وإنْ قال قائل: "إنَّه أراد به دين المسيح"، فكيف كان يقول لدين وحكم قد ابتداءً وظهر منذ حين: "إنَّه قد حان أنْ يبتدأ؟ فهذا محال من الظنّ.

وقال لوقا الخواري في الفصل الحادي عشر من إنجيله: "إنَّ المسيح قال لتلاميذه: إنِّي قد كنت أرسلتكم وليس معكم كيس ولا ترمال (يعني به المزود) ولا خفّ، فهل ضرّكم ونقصكم ذلك شيئاً؟" قالوا لا، قال: "أمّا الآن فليشتري من لم يكن له كيس<sup>4</sup> كيساً، ومن لم يكن له ترمال مزوداً، ومن لم يكن له سيف فليبع ثيابه وليشتري به نفسه سيفاً". ولم تزل سنن المسيح وفرائضه التي يُستنّ بها ويدعو إليها هي المسألة والإستسلام والإنسلاخ لا غير. فلها أمر تلاميذه وأعلام دينه في آخر أمره أنْ يبيعوا ثيابهم ويشتروا السيوف، عرف أهل التمييز والفهم أنّه إنّما

<sup>1</sup>C and D: في بيت <sup>2</sup>B: وحكم <sup>3</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B omit this word. <sup>4</sup>B omits the

شيئاً؟ قالوا لا. قال: أمّا الآن فليشتري من لم يكن له كيس

Simon Peter, head of the disciples, said in the Book of the Acts, 'It has come that judgements will begin from the House of God.'<sup>343</sup> The interpretation of this is that the House of God which the disciple refers to is Mecca, and it was there and nowhere else that the new rule had its beginning. If someone says that he meant by this the rule of the Jews, Christ had already told them, 'No stone will be left on another in Jerusalem that will not be crushed, and it will stay demolished until the day of resurrection.'<sup>344</sup> He made clear that | the new rule to which the disciple referred was the religion of Islam and its rule. This is similar to the words of the prophet Zephaniah (peace be upon him) from God that he would renew for the nations a chosen language.<sup>345</sup> And there was a new chosen language for the rule and the new religion.

6iv

With regard to the meaning of this, the prophet Daniel (peace be upon him) said what we have already pointed out. And in those days there was no house ascribed to God for the opponent to cling to and say that the rule had begun from it except Mecca. If someone should say that he meant by this the religion of Christ, how could he say about a religion and rule which had already begun and appeared for some time, 'It has come that it will begin'? This is impossible as an idea.

Luke the disciple says in Chapter 11 of his Gospel, 'Christ said to his disciples, I sent you out before without a purse or sack (by which he meant a bag) or shoe, and did this bring you harm or lacking at all? They said, No. He said, But now, let him who has no purse buy a purse, and him who has no sack a bag, and him who has no sword, let him sell his clothes to buy a sword for himself.'<sup>346</sup> Christ's practices and injunctions which he prescribed and preached were peacefulness, surrender and self-denial, no more. So when he commanded his disciples and the heads of his religion at the end of his life to sell their clothes and buy swords, men of discrimination and knowledge knew that in this he

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343 1 Peter 4:17.

344 Matthew 24:2.

345 Zephaniah 3:9.

346 Luke 22:35-36.

أشار بذلك إلى أمر آخر وحدث متجدد بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، وأشار إلى سيوفه وسهامه التي وصفها الأنبياء قبله. فقد<sup>1</sup> كان شمعون الصفا انتضى سيفه<sup>2</sup> وسله من جفنه ليلة طلبت<sup>3</sup> اليهود المسيح، وضرب بعض الشرط فجذع أذنه، 62r فتناولها المسيح عليه السلام بيده وردّها إلى مركبها من رأسه، فعادت<sup>4</sup> من ساعتها<sup>5</sup> كما كانت. وقال لشمعون عند ذلك: "أغمد سيفك"،<sup>6</sup> فإنّ من سلّ سيفاً قُتل بالسيف، يعني من سلّه من أمّته وأصحابه، ثمّ أنبأنا بالحال الأخرى<sup>7</sup> وأمر تلامذته ببيع ثيابهم وابتياح السيوف، ولا تُبتاع السيوف إلا لتسلّ ويضرب بها.

وقال فولس، وهو المتقدم عند النصاري، وهو الذي يُسمونه رسولاً، في رسالته إلى أهل جالاطيا: "إنّه كان لإبراهيم ابنان، أحدهما من أمة والآخر من حرّة، وقد كان مولد ابنه الذي من الأمة كمولد سائر البشر. فأما مولد الذي من الحرّة فإنه وُلد بالعدة من الله، فهما مثالان مشبّهان بالفرضين والناموسين. فأما هاجر فإنّها تُشبّه بجبل سينا الذي في بلاد أرابيا الذي هو نظير أورشلم هذه. فأما أورشلم التي في السماء فهي نظير امرأته الحرّة. فقد ثبت فولس في قوله هذا معانٍ جمّة، أولها أنّ إسماعيل وهاجر قد كانا استوطنا بلاد العرب، وهي التي سمّاها بلاد أرابيا. والثاني أنّ جبل سينا الذي بالشام يستطرد ويتصل ببلاد البوادي بقوله إنّ هاجر تُشبّه بطور سينا الذي في بلاد أرابيا. وسينا هو الذي<sup>8</sup> ذكرته التوراة في صدر هذه النبوات في قولها: "إنّ الربّ جاء من سينا، وطلع لنا<sup>9</sup> من ساعير، وظهر 62v من جبل فاران". فشهد فولس هذا بأنّ الربّ الذي قالت التوراة إنّّه جاء من سينا هو النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>10</sup> وهو الذي ظهر في بلاد أرابيا. وقد بينّا أنّنا

<sup>1</sup>C and D: وقد <sup>2</sup>C and D: السيف <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: مسكت <sup>4</sup>C and

D add: صحيحة <sup>5</sup>C and D: لساعتها <sup>6</sup>C and D: السيف <sup>7</sup>C and D: الآخر <sup>8</sup>هو الذي these two

words are repeated in B. <sup>9</sup>Reading with B; A: لها (cf. fol. 38<sup>v</sup> above). <sup>10</sup>B: صلعم

was pointing to another new rule and occurrence which would be renewed by the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and was pointing to his swords and arrows, which prophets before him had described. In fact, Simon Peter unsheathed his sword and drew it from its scabbard | on the night the Jews sought Christ, and he struck one of the officers and cut off his ear. But Christ (peace be upon him) caught it in his hand and put it back in its position on his head, and it was immediately restored to what it had been before. He said to Simon at this, 'Put back your sword, for he who draws a sword will be killed by the sword.'<sup>347</sup> He meant those who drew it in his community and his followers, and then he referred to us in the new situation in commanding his disciples to sell their clothes and buy swords. Swords are not bought except to be drawn and to strike.

62r

Paul, who was foremost among the Christians and whom they call an Apostle,<sup>348</sup> says in his Letter to the Galatians, 'Abraham had two sons, one by a bond-woman and the other by a free-woman. The birth of his son who was from the bond-woman was like the birth of all other men. But the birth of the one who was from the free-woman, he was born by a promise from God. Now they are both allegories and similes for the two decrees and laws. Hagar is compared with Mount Sinai which is in the land of Arabia, which corresponds to the present Jerusalem. But Jerusalem which is in heaven corresponds to his free-woman.'<sup>349</sup> In these words of his Paul confirms a host of meanings. The first of them is that Ishmael and Hagar went to live in the lands of the Arabs, which he calls the lands of Arabia. The second is that Mount Sinai, which is in Syria, continues to and connects with the lands of the Bedouin, in his words that Hagar is compared with Mount Sinai which is in the lands of Arabia. And Sinai is what the Torah refers to as the start of these prophecies in its words, 'The Lord came from Sinai and appeared to us from Seir and rose up from mount Paran.'<sup>350</sup> In this Paul witnesses | that the lord who the Torah says came from Sinai was the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), and was the one who appeared in the lands of Arabia. We have shown above that the meaning of

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347 This is a harmonisation of Matthew 26:51–52, Luke 22:50–51 and John 18:10–11.

348 This reference indicates how completely 'Ali has turned away from his former faith.

349 Galatians 4:22–26. This reference to Paul predicting the coming of Islam is a rare example in Muslim polemical works of positive regard, going against the usual condemnations of him as the first author of corruption in Christian teachings.

350 Deuteronomy 33:2, quoted earlier on, pp. 342–343.

معنى الربّ واقع على الأنبياء والسادات، وليس<sup>1</sup> يكون من الإبانة والإفصاح<sup>2</sup> أكثر من تسمية بلاد أرابيا التي عني بها بلاد العرب، لكنّها لفظة مستعجمة غير فصيحة، فإنّها جعلت مكان "العرب" "الأرب". والثالث أنّ بيت المقدس هو نظير مكّة. والرابع أنّ هذا الناموس الثاني والفريضة الثانية سماوية لا شكّ فيها، فقد سمّاهما<sup>3</sup> معاً<sup>4</sup> بإسم واحد ولم يفرّق بينهما بمعنى من المعاني. فأما تقديمه<sup>5</sup> ابن الحرّة، وقوله إنّ ابن الأمة لم يُولد بالعدة، فذلك منه بالعصبية والميل. وفيما استشهدتُ به من قوارع التوراة على إسماعيل ما فيه كفاية وبرهان على أنّه أيضاً وُلد ليس بعدة واحدة بل بعدات كثيرة.

فهذه نبوّات متظاهرة، وأخبار مؤيَّدة مُخلّدة على وجه الدهر، لا يدّعيها أحد من غير المسلمين إلّا فاز بالسهم الأخب<sup>6</sup> وبالكذب الأعظم. ولن يفعل ذلك إلّا يهوديّ دامر أو نصرانيّ هامر، يتعلّان به ويخدعان أنفسهما وغيرهما بذكره. فقد بان للنصارى خاصّة ولليهود عامّة استحكام غضب الله على بني إسرائيل ولعنه إيّاهم، وتبرؤه منهم ومن دينهم، وإعلامه إيّاهم أنّه مُحرق أصلهم الذي تفرّعوا منه، ومبير خضراءهم وغارس في البادية والأرض المعطلة العطشى غيرهم.

وما<sup>7</sup> أكثر تعجبيّ في هذا الباب | من اليهود، فإنّهم يقولون ذلك تفرّجاً به وتجملاً<sup>8</sup> بادعائه، ويتمنّون الأمانى<sup>9</sup> غروراً وبطلاناً. وإنّما العجب من النصارى وهم يشهدون على اليهود بما<sup>10</sup> قلنا صباحاً ومساءً<sup>11</sup> بأنّ<sup>12</sup> قد قطع الله دابرهم ومحا عن

<sup>1</sup>C and D: وأين (wrongly). <sup>2</sup>C and D: والإيضاح. <sup>3</sup>B, C and D: سمّاهما. <sup>4</sup>C and D omit this word.

<sup>5</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>6</sup>C and D: الأخبث. <sup>7</sup>C and D: فما. <sup>8</sup>C and D: وتجملاً. <sup>9</sup>Reading with

B; C and D: ويمتثلون; illegible in A. <sup>10</sup>Reading with B; C and D: على ما; illegible in A. <sup>11</sup>B and C:

صباح مساء. <sup>12</sup>B omits this word.



'lord' applies to prophets and masters. Nothing could be more clear and plain than to name the countries of Arabia, by which he meant the countries of the Arabs, although it is an alien form, not pure Arabic, in that it has 'Arab' in place of "Arab"? The third is that Jerusalem corresponds to Mecca. And the fourth is that there is no doubt that this second law and second decree is from heaven. For he calls them both by one name and makes no distinction in meaning at all between them. His giving priority to the son of the free-woman, and his words that the son of the bond-woman was not born by a promise is prejudice and bias on his part. In the highlights of the Torah about Ishmael that I have quoted there is enough, and proof that he too was born not by one promise but by many promises.

These are mutually confirming prophecies and corroborating reports, perpetuated over the length of time, which no non-Muslim could reject without attaining the most unsuccessful lot and the greatest lie. No one would do this except a no-hope Jew or a nonsensical Christian, offering it as an excuse for themselves, and deceiving themselves and others by saying it. God's increased wrath towards the People of Israel, his cursing them, his withdrawal from them and from that religion, his making plain to them that he would destroy their root from which they sprang, stunt their greenery, and plant others than them in the desert and the untilled, thirsty land, must be evident to the Christians in particular and the Jews in general.

On this matter I am truly amazed | at the Jews, because they say this as something to find pleasure in and to sum up the claim with, and they seek for what they desire through deception and falsehood. Indeed, the Christians are a matter of amazement: they bear witness against the Jews, as we have said, morning and evening, that God has severed their root, wiped the traces of them

جريد الأرض أثرهم، وأباد رسم ملّتهم ونواميسهم.<sup>1</sup> فأما أمة<sup>2</sup> المسيح عليه السلام، فليس لها أن تدّعي تلك النبوّات التي اختصرت واستشهدت بها على النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> من أسر الملوك واستعباد السادات وسوقهم مقرّنين بالقيود والأغلال، ومن توارث الأراضي<sup>4</sup> القفار البلاقع، وضرب الرقاب، وإثّار القتل، والإثخان في الأرض، وغير ذلك من النعوت التي لا تليق ولا تجب إلّا لإسماعيل وهاجر وعترته وملكّة وحجّاجها. ولقد صرح عدّة منهم بإسم النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم،<sup>5</sup> ووصفوه أيضاً وسيّافيه ورماته، وسير المنيا وسباع الطير أمام عساكره، وازدحام الإبل والقطرات في بلاده، واصطلامه الأمم والملوك المخالفين له. فهذه كلها محقّقة لدينه، مفخّمة لشأنه، ومصدّقة لما أدّت دعائه عنه، لا سيّما وقد ختم دانيال تلك النبوّات كلها بما نفى به الشكّ وأخبر أنّ إله السماء يقيم ملكاً دائماً لا يتبدّل ولا يزول. ومن لم يخضع لمن اختاره الله وأقامه فهو المرذول الذليل.

63v

في الردّ على من ذكر أنّ المهاجرين والأنصار دخلوا في الدين من غير آية

فإنّ قال قائل مثل الذي كان يحتجّ به عمّ لي كان مشهوراً بالجدل والبراعة، معروفًا في أفق العراق وخراسان بأبي زكّاريحي بن النعمان، قال في كتاب ألفه في الردّ على أهل الأديان أنّه بحث عن الأسباب التي دخل بها<sup>6</sup> عدّة من المهاجرين والسابقين الأوّلين ومن دخل معهم في الإسلام من الرجال والنساء، فلم يجد أحداً دخل فيه لآية رآها أو علامة<sup>7</sup> أتى بها. فكانت هذه حجة قويّة جداً ما

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>B omits this word <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B:

الأرض <sup>5</sup>B: صلعم <sup>6</sup>C and D: فيها (wrongly). <sup>7</sup>C and D: وعلامة (wrongly).

from the register of the earth, and annihilated any sign of their faith and laws. And the community of Christ (peace be upon him) cannot lay claim to these prophecies which I have summarised and quoted in favour of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace), such as taking kings captive and making slaves of masters, and leading them bound together in chains and fetters, and such as gaining the deserted and waste lands as inheritance, striking necks and amassing slaughter and massacre in the earth, and more besides, such as the characteristics that only attach and apply to Ishmael, Hagar and his near relations, and to Mecca and its pilgrims. A number of them have also explicitly given the name of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) and have described him and his fighters with sword and arrow, the going of death and birds of prey before his armies, the crowding of caravans and camel trains in his lands, and his annihilation of the nations and kings opposed to him. All these are proof of his religion, honour to his position and confirmation of what his envoys preach about him. Daniel in particular has sealed all these prophecies with something by which he expels doubt, and has announced that the God of heaven will establish an everlasting kingdom that will never change or disappear. He who does not submit to the one whom God has chosen and established is wicked and contemptible.

**The refutation of the one who says that the Emigrants and Helpers |  
entered the religion without a sign**

63v

If someone should say something similar to the argument put forward by my uncle who was famous for debate and skilfulness, and known throughout Iraq and Khurāsān as Abū Zakkār Yaḥyā ibn al-Nu‘mān<sup>351</sup>—in a book which he wrote in refutation of the people of the religions he said that he had investigated the reasons why numbers of the Emigrants and the very earliest people had entered, and also the men and women who entered Islam with them, and he had not found a single one who had entered because of a miracle he had seen or a sign he had reported. This was for me a very strong

351 In what ‘Alī says about Abū Zakkār here and earlier (pp. 282–283), it appears that his uncle had made a strong impression on him with his arguments against Islam. Both his main point here, that Muḥammad did not perform any miracles to make his contemporaries convert, and the point mentioned earlier, that the literary qualities of the Qur’ān are not proof of its divine origins, show that his refutation denied Islam had any God-given basis. ‘Alī’s work, and the whole *dalā’il al-nubuwwa* genre, were largely geared to refute precisely this kind of accusation.

زلت مغترّاً بها، عمياً عنها، حتى إذا انسلخت من دينه رأيت الجواب عنها سهلاً والمخرج فسيحاً. فإننا إذا عارضناهم بمثلها وجبت لنا الحجّة التي إن أبطلوها بطلت نبوّات عدّة من أنبيائهم. فليس دخول جماعة في دين نبي<sup>2</sup> من الأنبياء من غير آية رأوها ممّا يُبطل سائر آيات ذلك النبي، ولا امتناع النبي من إظهار آية في وقت من الأوقات ممّا يُوجب تكذيبه.

فهذا حزقيال النبي عليه السلام يقول في الفصل العاشر<sup>1</sup> إنّه جماعة من بني إسرائيل يريدون امتحانه ويسألونه<sup>3</sup> عن أشياء، فكان جواب حزقيال أن قال: "إنّ الله أعلمني وأمرني أن أعلمكم أنّ ربّ الأرباب يقول: "إني أقسم قسمًا بإسمي أنّي أنا الحيّ وأنّي لا أحيّر<sup>4</sup> جواباً عما تريدون". فأما المسيح عليه السلام فقد تبعه وآمن به جماعة كثيرة من غير أن يُظهر لهم آية، فمن ذلك قول متى الحواريّ في  
64r الفصل الرابع من إنجيله: "إنّه بينا المسيح عليه السلام يسير في ساحل بحر الجليل رأى أخوين، أحدهما شمعون الذي لقّبه الصفا، الذي استترعاه أمر أمته وجعله أساس ملّته، وأخاه أندراوس، وهما يصيدان السمك في البحر فقال لهما وانتما لهما: "اتبعاني أجعلكما بعد يومكما هذا تصيدان الناس"، وأنهما رفضا من فورهما شباكهما واتّبعاه.

وقال متى في هذا الفصل إنّ المسيح لما جاوز ما هناك رأى أخوين آخرين يُقال لأحدهما يعقوب بن زبدي ويوحنا<sup>5</sup> وهما يصيدان مع أبيهما، وأنّه دعاهما إلى دينه، فتركاً أباهما في السفينة واتّبعاه. وقال متى في هذا الفصل إنّّه لما جاوز المسيح

<sup>1</sup>This word, which is added by the same hand in the margin of A, is omitted in C and D. <sup>2</sup>C: نبيّ وأوماً <sup>3</sup>D: ويسألون (wrongly). <sup>4</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: أحيّر <sup>5</sup>C and D: والآخر يوحنا: <sup>6</sup>B: إليهما

argument; I continued to be deceived by it and blinded by it until, when I put aside his faith, I saw the answer to it easily and the escape easily. For if we answered them back in the same way, we would be credited with an argument which, if they disproved it, many prophecies from their prophets would be disproved. The entry of a group into the religion of a prophet without a sign which they had seen is not something that would invalidate the other signs of this Prophet, nor is the Prophet's refusal to produce a sign at any particular time anything that would prove him a liar.<sup>352</sup>

Ezekiel himself (peace be upon him) says in Chapter 10 that a group of the People of Israel came to him wanting to test him, and asking various things. Ezekiel's reply was to say, 'God has informed and commanded me to inform you that the Lord of lords says: I swear by my name that I am the living One and that I will not give an answer to what you want.'<sup>353</sup> As for Christ (peace be upon him), many crowds followed him and believed in him, even though he had not shown them a sign. Such are the words | of Matthew the disciple in Chapter 4 of his Gospel, that when Christ (peace be upon him) was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, one of them Simon, whom he nicknamed 'the Rock', gave oversight over the affairs of his community, and made the foundation of his faith, and his brother Andrew, and they were catching fish in the sea. So, beckoning to them, he said to them, 'Follow me, and after this very day I will make you fishers of men.' They both immediately left their nets and followed him.<sup>354</sup> In this Chapter Matthew says that when Christ was going past there he saw two other brothers, one called James son of Zebedee, and John, and they were fishing with their father. He called them to his religion, and they left their father in the boat and followed him.<sup>355</sup> Matthew says in this Chapter that when Jesus was going past the place he saw a collector

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352 'Alī concedes that his uncle is right on this particular point, but he maintains that Muḥammad did perform miracles at other times, and thus his claim to prophetic status is not weakened. He proceeds to show by implication that his uncle's argument is internally inconsistent, because several biblical prophets did not perform signs at particular times although their status is not questioned.

353 Ezekiel 20:1–3.

354 Matthew 4:18–20.

355 Matthew 4:21–22.

ما هناك رأى رجلاً عشاراً يُقال له متى، فقال له: "اتبعني"، فتوجه معه، يعني به نفسه وهو متى الحواري أحد الأربعة الذين كتبوا الإنجيل.

فهؤلاء خمسة من روساء الحواريين الأولين المتقدمين وهم من الإثني عشر حواريًا، قد ذكر الإنجيل أنهم اتبعوا<sup>1</sup> المسيح من غير أن يريهم آية أو يسمعهم<sup>2</sup> كلمة مقنعة ما خلا<sup>3</sup> الدعاء الخالي فقط. فليت شعري ما الذي ضرّ المسيح من ذلك؟ أو ما أنكر عمي أبو زكار ومن قال بقوله من اتباع من اتبع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>4</sup> من غير أن يروا منه آية؟ فإن كان ما ذكرنا يوجب إبطال سائر آيات المسيح عليه السلام، فكذلك يجب إبطال آيات النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>5</sup> لدخول<sup>64v</sup> من دخل في دينه من غير آية رآها منه.

ولقد أتى المسيح عليه السلام قوم من اليهود<sup>6</sup> يسألونه آية، فليس أنه لم يظهرها لهم لكنه قد فهم قذفاً، واقترى عليهم وعلى قبائلهم افتراءً. يشهد بذلك متى صاحب الإنجيل في الفصل الثاني عشر، ويخبر أن نفراً من اليهود أتوا المسيح يسألونه آية فقال مجيباً: "إن القبيلة الخبيثة الفاجرة تطلب آية ولن تعطى آية ما خلا آية يونا<sup>7</sup> النبي". فأخبرهم بأنه لا يظهر لهم آية البتة لأنهم من القبيلة الخبيثة، يعني بها اليهود قاطبة. فأما آية يونا<sup>8</sup> التي<sup>9</sup> ذكرها، فهي لبثه في بطن الحوت ثلاثاً، وليست<sup>10</sup> هذه من آيات<sup>11</sup> المسيح بل هي من آيات يونا، ويونا متقدم له في الزمان بدهر طويل. وإنما الآية هي ما يظهره النبي لمن شاهده من الأوابد التي لا يقدر أن يأتي بمثلها غيره، وأن يتنبأ على ما غاب عنه فيصحّ في دهره.

من اليهود: 6C and D omit: صلعم<sup>5</sup>: B: صلعم<sup>4</sup>: B: عدا<sup>3</sup>: ويسمعهم<sup>2</sup>: C and D: تبعوا<sup>1</sup>: C and D:

النبي<sup>8</sup>: add: هو يونس عليه السلام: A note written in the same hand in the margin of A reads:

(wrongly). نبوات<sup>11</sup>: C and D: وليس<sup>10</sup>: A and B: الذي<sup>9</sup>: C and D:

of the tithe called Matthew. He said to him, 'Follow me', and he went with him. He means himself, for he was Matthew the disciple, one of the four who wrote the Gospel.<sup>356</sup>

These are five from the leaders of the disciples, the first and foremost, and they are from among the twelve disciples who the Gospel says followed Christ without him having shown them a sign or given them a convincing word apart from the mere call alone. I would like to know what damage has been caused to Christ in this, or why my uncle Abū Zakkār and those who agree with his words will not accept that those who followed the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) did so without seeing any sign from him. So if what we have said necessarily invalidates all Christ's signs (peace be upon him), | then likewise it necessarily invalidates the Prophet's signs (may God bless him and give him peace), because those who entered his religion did so without seeing a sign from him.

64v

People from among the Jews came to Christ (peace be upon him) asking him for a sign, and not only did he not produce one for them but he accused them and condemned them and their families. Matthew, the author of the Gospel, witnesses to this in Chapter 12: he declares that a group of the Jews came to Christ asking for a sign, and he said in reply, 'The wicked, adulterous tribe seeks a sign, but no sign will be given other than the sign of the prophet Jonah.'<sup>357</sup> So he declared to them that he would not produce any sign for them, because they were from the wicked tribe, by which he meant all the Jews together. The sign of Jonah which he mentioned is his sojourn in the belly of the whale for three [days]. But this is one of Jonah's signs, not one of Christ's, and Jonah preceded him by a long stretch of time. A sign is something a prophet produces in the presence of those who see it, something unusual which no one else can produce the like of, and foretelling what is hidden from him, and it is proved right in his time.

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356 Matthew 9:9.

357 Matthew 12:39.

فأما قول القائل: "إن آيتي أن موسى فلق البحر، وأن المسيح أحيا ميتاً، فإن ذلك غير مقبول منه، لأنه برهان لغيره لا له. ومع هذا، فإنه لا يُظنّ بالمسيح التزيّد<sup>1</sup> والخلف، ولا أنه وعد شيئاً ثم رجع عنه، أو قال: "إني لا أفعل أمراً" ثم فعله، لأنّ قوله لمن سأله الآية من بني إسرائيل إن ذلك ممّا لا تُجابون إليه لا يخلو من أن يكون قاله عن الله أو عن نفسه، فإن كان قاله عن الله فقد فعل الله إذاً خلاف ما قال لهم، لأنه قد أعطاهم بعد هذا القول آيات على يدي المسيح. وإن كان قاله عن نفسه، فقد فعل المسيح إذاً خلاف ما قال ونقض القول الأول، وهذا ممّا لا يليق به ولا يُظنّ بمثله. فهذا أيضاً ممّا أحسبه تحريفاً وفساداً في الإنجيل من قبل التراجمة والكتاب.

وقال متى في الفصل السادس عشر إن اليهود لما رأته يدعو الناس ويستميلهم عن اليهودية، اجتمعت إليه وقالت له: "بأي سلطان تفعل ما نرى، ومن جعل لك هذا السلطان؟" قال لهم يسوع مجيباً: "إني سائلكم أيضاً عن مسألة إن أجبتكم عنها أجبتكم عن مسألتكم هذه، أنبثوني عن معمودية يوحنا<sup>2</sup> بن زكريا، من أين هي أمن السماء أم من الأرض؟" فتوقف القوم عن الجواب وقالوا: "لا نعلم". فقال المسيح: "وأنا أيضاً لا أنبؤكم بأي سلطان أفعل". فلم نره أجاب القوم عمّا سألوهم، بل عارضهم بمسألة أخرى فلم يكن لأحد أن يطعن عليه به.

وقال متى في الفصل السادس إن فيلاطوس خليفة ملك الروم قال له حين رفعته اليهود إليه: "أقسم عليك بحق الله لما أعلمني، أنت<sup>3</sup> المسيح ابن الله أم لا؟". فلم يزدّه المسيح عليه السلام على أن قال له: "أنت قلت ذلك"، وليس في قوله هذا إثبات

أنت<sup>3</sup>B: يحبي<sup>2</sup>B and D: التزّد<sup>1</sup>C and D: (wrongly).



As for anyone saying, 'My sign is that Moses parted the sea and that Christ brought a dead person back to life', this will not be accepted from him because it is a proof for someone else and not for him. In addition to this, in Christ's case there is no suspicion of offering much and not fulfilling nor that he promised something and then refused it, or said, 'I will not do something', and then did it. For his words to the men from the People of Israel who asked him for a sign, that there would be no response to this, can only be that he spoke either from God or from himself. If he spoke it from God, then God must have acted | otherwise than what he said to them, because after saying this he provided 65r signs for them through Christ. And if he said it from himself, then Christ must have acted otherwise than what he said, cancelling his previous words, but this is something unworthy of him, the kind of thing that cannot be contemplated. This is also the kind of thing that I count as corruption and mistakenness in the Gospel on the part of translators and scribes.<sup>358</sup>

In Chapter 16 Matthew says that when the Jews saw him calling people and turning them away from Judaism, they came together to him and said to him, 'By what authority are you doing what we see, and who has given you this authority?' in reply Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you a question. If you give me an answer to it, I will give you an answer to this question of yours. Tell me about John son of Zechariah's baptising, where was it from, from heaven or the earth?' The people did not answer, and they said, 'We do not know'. So Christ said, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I act.'<sup>359</sup> We do not see him answering what the people asked him, but responding to them with another question so that no one could condemn him for it.

In Chapter 6 Matthew says that Pilate, the Roman emperor's representative, said to him when the Jews handed him over to him, 'I solemnly require you by the truth of God to tell me, are you the Christ, Son of God, or not?' But Christ (peace be upon him) did no more than say to him, 'It is you who have said this',<sup>360</sup> without either confirmation or denial in these words. So it is possible

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358 As though sensitive to accusations that the biblical books had been corrupted, 'Alī limits his criticisms of the text to the process of transmitting them.

359 Matthew 21:23–27.

360 Matthew 26:63–64.

ولا إنكار. فللقائل<sup>1</sup> أن يقول إنه أراد به الإنتفاء | والنصح<sup>2</sup> عن نفسه والتكذيب<sup>3</sup> لمن حكى ذلك عنه، وإلا فما باله<sup>4</sup> لم يقل بلى<sup>6</sup> إني<sup>7</sup> ابن الله وهو حينئذ في الموقف الفيصل والمقام الأهل الذي لو صرح<sup>8</sup> بما<sup>9</sup> سُئل عنه أو أظهر فيه آية لظهر الأمر وخزى به<sup>10</sup> اليهود وبهتوا. فهذه<sup>11</sup> أيضاً مسألة لم يجب المسيح عنها فلم يعبه<sup>12</sup> ذلك لجلاله<sup>13</sup> شأنه وما تقدم من آياته.

وقال<sup>14</sup> في الإنجيل الذي هو في أيدي النصارى إن اليهود كانت تقول له: <sup>15</sup>”إن كنت ابن الله فانزل عن الخشبة لنؤمن بك“، فلم يفعل ولم يظهر آية. فلا نقول لذلك إنه لم تكن له قبلها آية، لأنه كان أعلم بما يُدبر فيه وبما أحب الله من ذلك وقدره له.

وأكثر من هذا ما قال متى في الأصحاح الثاني إن الشيطان قال للمسيح عند امتحان الشيطان إياه: ”إن كنت ابن الله، فقل لهذه الصخور تصرّ طعاماً“، فلم يزدّه على أن قال: ”مكتوب في كتب التنزيل أن حياة الناس ليست بالخبز فقط، بل بكل كلمة تخرج من فم الله“. أفأترون—يهديكم الله—أن المسيح عليه السلام وغيره من الأنبياء قد سُئلوا عن مسائل، وطلب منهم آيات فلم يجيبوا إليها لأن الله لم يكن أذن لهم فيها ولم يفتح لهم بابها في تلك الأوقات؟ فقد سأل التلامذة المسيح

<sup>1</sup>B: فللقائل <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: والسنح <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: والتبكيك <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit: <sup>5</sup>C and D: فلما باله <sup>6</sup>C and D: فلم <sup>7</sup>B: أنا <sup>8</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit this word. <sup>9</sup>C and D: وهو حينئذ ... لو صرح <sup>10</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: <sup>11</sup>C and D: يظهر آية ليظهر الأمر وخزى به <sup>12</sup>C and D: يزر (wrongly). <sup>13</sup>C and D: بجلاله (wrongly). <sup>14</sup>C and D: وقيل (wrongly). <sup>15</sup>C and D omit this word.

to say that he meant by them a denial | and a clear indication of himself, and incrimination of anyone who reported this from him. Otherwise, why is it that he did not say, 'Yes, I am the Son of God', when at the time he was in the situation of being judged and a condition of fear, so that if he had made clear what he had been asked about or produced a sign, the matter would have been made clear and the Jews would be ashamed about this and confused? This too is a question which Christ did not answer, and this did not prove him deficient, because of the exaltedness of his status and his previous miracles.

65v

In the Gospel which the Christians possess it says that the Jews said to him, 'If you are the Son of God then come down from the cross so that we may believe in you,'<sup>361</sup> though he did not, nor did he produce any sign. But we do not say on account of this that he had no sign before, because he knew in detail what was planned for him in this, what God desired from it and had determined for him.<sup>362</sup>

Even more than this is what Matthew says in Chapter 2, that during Satan's temptation of him Satan said to Christ, 'If you are the Son of God, then say to these stones, "Become food"', but he did no more than say, 'It is written in the revealed books that the life of man is not through bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'<sup>363</sup> Can you not see, may God guide you, that Christ (peace be upon him) and other prophets were posed questions and asked for signs, but they did not give answers because God did not allow them to and did not open their way to them at these times? Thus, the disciples asked

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361 Matthew 27:40.

362 'Ali's words here are subtly unspecific. He explains why Jesus refused to save himself from being crucified in terms that could be interpreted as either to fulfil God's plan of salvation or to demonstrate that God would prevent him from being killed at the hands of the Jews.

363 Matthew 4:3-4.

عليه السلام عن الساعة فقال: "ذاك غيب مستور عني لا يعلمه إلا الله وحده". فلم يعبه ذلك ولم يزر به. فهكذا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.<sup>1</sup>

فهذه جوابات ومعارضات مقنعة منصفة، وحجج قاطعة لتلك العلقة والمسألة التي تعلّق بها تلامذة اعمي أبي زكار ومن قال بقولهم.<sup>2</sup> على أنني لم أر أحداً<sup>3</sup> من علماء النصراني في قديم الدهر وحديثه احتجّ على المسلمين بهذه الحجّة غير عمي، وقد حلّها الله وفسخها<sup>4</sup> بمنّه وتوفيقه،<sup>5</sup> وبما استقيت<sup>6</sup> واستمليت من حكمة أمير المؤمنين، أيده الله، ومعارضاته ومجواباته.

فاستعملوا—يهديكم الله—الفكر، ولا تعطلّوا الأفهام فتخرب أو تبور،<sup>7</sup> واعلموا أنّكم مخلوقون لخطب جليل وموقوفون على شفير جنة أو نار، فمن انهار به الباطل إلى النار فقد هوى في الخزي السرمد والندم الدائم والعذاب الذي وصفه المسيح عليه السلام فقال: "إنّ نار لا تطفأ وديدان لا تموت". ومن رجع به الحقّ إلى ساحات الجنة وغرف الفرديس فقد سعد، وفاز فوزاً عظيماً، وحاز الأمان الدائم والغنم الذي لا عين رأت ولا أذن سمعت. فانصحو أنفسكم ولا تغشوها، واصدقوها ولا تغروها. فقد وضع الحقّ وبرح الخفاء وبان اليقين.

في الردّ على من عاب الإسلام بسنة من سننه أو شريعة من شرائعه

فإن طعن طاعن من أهل الكتاب في فريضة من فرائض الدين وسنة من سنن المسلمين، حاف علينا وظلم، وعاب الأنبياء كلّهم، وكان بعرض خطيئة وعقاب.

<sup>1</sup>B: صلعم <sup>2</sup>C and D: بقوله <sup>3</sup>C and D: واحداً <sup>4</sup>C and D: وفسرها <sup>5</sup>C and D: وكرمه <sup>6</sup>C and D:

فتخرب أو تبور <sup>7</sup>C and D omit: استفدت

Christ (peace be upon him) about the Hour, and he said, 'This is completely hidden from me; no one knows it except God alone.'<sup>364</sup> This did not prove him deficient or undermine him, and it is the same with the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace).

These are convincing and fair replies and responses, and conclusive proofs to this concern and issue to which my uncle Abū Zakkār's | disciples and those who promote their teachings cling, though I have not noticed any Christian scholar other than my uncle using this argument against the Muslims in times past or present. God has resolved it and declared it wrong by his grace and assistance, and by the wisdom, remonstrations and responses of the Commander of the Faithful (may God guide him) that I have learnt and reproduced.<sup>365</sup>

66r

Now apply your minds, may God guide you, do not hinder your intellects for them to fall waste and fallow, and know that you are created for a weighty matter, and are standing on the brink of a garden or fire. The one for whom baselessness crumbles away into the fire<sup>366</sup> drops into never-ending ignominy and everlasting remorse, and the torment that Christ (peace be upon him) described when he said, 'It is a fire that is not extinguished and worms that do not die.'<sup>367</sup> And the one for whom truth tips the scale towards the open expanses of the garden and high points of paradise has gained happiness and attained great success, and has achieved everlasting security and the gain that no eye has seen and no ear heard of.<sup>368</sup> So be sincere with yourselves and not dishonest, be truthful and do not delude yourselves. Truth lies open, the hidden has become apparent and certainty is evident.

### **The refutation of those who find fault with Islam because of one of its rites or laws**

If one of the People of the Book speaks evil of one of the regulations of religion or the rules of the Muslims, he has abused us, wronged all the prophets and judged them to be at fault, and opened himself to sin and punishment. Thus,

<sup>364</sup> Matthew 24:36.

<sup>365</sup> While 'Alī could well have mentioned his uncle's arguments to the caliph, it strains plausibility to imagine that he is doing anything more than paying unreal compliments when he suggests that al-Mutawakkil provided rejoinders to them.

<sup>366</sup> A reminiscence of Q 9:109.

<sup>367</sup> Mark 9:48.

<sup>368</sup> A reminiscence of 1 Corinthians 2:9, and cf. a number of Ḥadīths in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Book 40. *Kitāb al-janna*, <http://sunnah.com/muslim/53>.

66v

فإنهم إن عابوا الذبائح فموروثه عن إبراهيم وجميع الأنبياء من ولده عليهم السلام. وإن ذموا الختان فلمسيح ومن قبله. وإن أنكروا الطلاق فلموسى ومن تبعه.<sup>1</sup> وإن أبطلوا<sup>2</sup> الأقسام بالله فعن الله<sup>3</sup> تعالى وأنبيائه.<sup>4</sup> قال أشعيا النبي عليه السلام: "إني جزمت القول وأنبأت بالحق<sup>5</sup> أنه تخزلي كل ركة ويقسم كل لسان بإسمي".<sup>6</sup> وقال فولس الذي تسميه النصرارى رسولاً: "إن الله لما<sup>7</sup> وعد إبراهيم ما وعده في ولده أقسم له بنفسه". وقال دانيال إن الملك الذي تراءى له رفع يده إلى السماء وأقسم بالمنعم الدائم أن جميع ما قال كائن لا محالة.

وإن عابوا الجهاد، فقد جاهد إبراهيم الملوك الأربعة الذين كانوا ساروا إلى بلاد الجزيرة لشن<sup>9</sup> الغارات على أهلها فذب عن جيرته وخطائه، وطحطح عساكرهم بغلمانته وتلاد بيته، وفاز بفخر ذلك وفلجه وباقي ذكره ومذخور أجره،<sup>10</sup> فإنه رد على ملوكها جميع ما أنقذ من الغنائم والذراري، ولم يرزأهم حرزة ولا قدماً بعد أن كانت ملوكها قد جلت وأسلمت البلاد. وقتل يشوع بن نون أحداً وثلاثين ملكاً من ملوك الشام، ولم يترك في مدينة من مدنها تسمى عاني دياراً ولا نافع<sup>11</sup> نار من غير أن يدعوهم إلى دين أو يطلب منهم جزية أو إتاوة أو يقبل فدية كما قد يفعله<sup>12</sup> المسلمون.

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: [ sic; wrongly]. <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: طعنوا في

<sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: فهو قوله <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: (sic) لأنبيائه/لأنبياءه

<sup>5</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: <sup>6</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: (sic) <sup>7</sup>C and D omit this

<sup>8</sup>C and D: وأقسم <sup>9</sup>C and D: لتشن <sup>10</sup>C and D: أمره (wrongly). <sup>11</sup>C and D: نفاع <sup>12</sup>C and D: يفعل

<sup>12</sup>C and D: يفعل

if they find fault with sacrifices,<sup>369</sup> these are handed down from Abraham and all the prophets descended from him (peace be upon them). If they criticise circumcision,<sup>370</sup> it was Christ's and those before him. If they deny divorce,<sup>371</sup> it was Moses's and those who succeeded him. If they dispute swearing by God,<sup>372</sup> it was from God Almighty and his prophets: the prophet Isaiah (peace be upon him) said, 'I have determined the word and declared in truth that every knee shall bow to me and every tongue swear by my name';<sup>373</sup> Paul, whom the Christians call Apostle, said, 'When God gave Abraham his promise in his sons, he swore to him by his own self';<sup>374</sup> and Daniel said that the angel who appeared to him raised his hand to heaven and swore by the eternal beneficent One that all he had spoken about would undoubtedly occur.<sup>375</sup>

66v

If they find fault with sacred warfare,<sup>376</sup> Abraham fought against the four kings who had moved against the land of Jazīra to launch attacks against its people. So he defended his neighbourhood and allies, annihilated their armies by his servants and those born in his house, and gained glory through this and success for himself, memory of him lived on and his reward was stored up. He returned to their kings all the spoils and the young people he had saved, not depriving them of a pearl or piece of leather after their kings had abandoned and given up the lands.<sup>377</sup> Joshua son of Nun killed thirty-one of the kings of Syria,<sup>378</sup> and in one of its towns called 'Ānī he did not leave houses or anyone to blow on the fire without calling them to religion or requiring poll tax or tribute from them, nor did he take ransom as the Muslims might do.<sup>379</sup> The prophet

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369 Cf. Hebrews 10:11–14.

370 Cf. e.g. Romans 2:25–29, 1 Corinthians 7:18–19.

371 Cf. Matthew 5:32, 19:9.

372 Cf. Matthew 5:34–37.

373 Isaiah 45:23.

374 Galatians 3:16.

375 Daniel 12:7.

376 Cf. Matthew 5:39.

377 Genesis 14:13–24.

378 Joshua 12:24.

379 Joshua 8:1–28 (naming the city as Ai).

وقال اشموئيل النبي عليه السلام في الفصل الثاني عشر إن داوود النبي عليه السلام غزا بلاداً من بلدان الشام تسمى فلست، فلم يذّر فيها رجلاً ولا امرأة إلا قتلهم، وساق الغنم والبقر والحمر والجمال، وانتسف الأموال والذخائر والأثاث من غير أن يدعوهم إلى دين أو إعطاء جزية أو دخول في طاعة. وذكر كتاب اشموئيل أن داوود جاع يوماً فوجه عبده إلى رجل في طلب<sup>1</sup> طعام فلم يحمل<sup>2</sup> إليه شيئاً. فسار إليه في جمعه للإيقاع بذلك<sup>3</sup> الرجل وأهل قريته، فإذا هو بإمرأته قد استقبلته ومعها طعام وأجبان<sup>4</sup> وشراب قد حملته إليه، وخافت<sup>5</sup> زوجها فيه. فقبل ذلك منها وطابت نفسه وسكن غيظه وانصرف عنه. فهذا وما أشبهه من الأنبياء غير منكر ولا مطعون فيه.

فأمّا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>6</sup> فإنه أمر بالدعاء إلى الله الفرد الدائم القهار بالترغيب والترهيب ليكون الدين واحداً والمعبود فرداً. فن أجاب كان له ما للمسلمين وعليه ما عليهم، ومن لم يحب إلى ذلك وأعطى الجزية عن يد صاغراً حقن بها دمه ووجبت له الذمة بالطاعة. وكان له<sup>7</sup> في ذلك رياضة للكفرة لطيفة، وتذليل لنخوتهم وخيلائهم، وداعية لأهل الأنفة والحمية منهم إلى الانتقال عن لؤم الذل والذمة إلى شرف العز والحرية، فإن أبوا ذلك أيضاً كانت الحرب من ورائهم.

وقد<sup>8</sup> فعل موسى عليه السلام ما هو أكثر من ذلك، فإنه لما أمر بالرحلة عن مصر وإخراج بني إسرائيل منها، أخبرهم بأن الله تعالى يأمرهم بأن<sup>9</sup> يستعير كل إمريء منهم كسوة جاره وخليطه وحلي نسائه وبناته، ويعلموهم بأنهم يريدون عيداً

<sup>1</sup>B omits this word. <sup>2</sup>C and D: تحمل <sup>3</sup>This word is repeated in B. <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in

A; C and D omit this word. <sup>5</sup>B: وخالفت <sup>6</sup>B: صلعم <sup>7</sup>Reading with B; A omits this word. <sup>8</sup>C

أن D: فقد <sup>9</sup>C and D: أن



Samuel (peace be upon him) says in Chapter 12 that David the prophet (peace be upon him) raided territories of Syria called Philistia, and did not leave there a man or woman he did not kill. He took sheep, cattle, asses and camels, and carried off | goods, supplies and furnishings without calling them to religion, to pay poll-tax or to enter into obedience.<sup>380</sup> The Book of Samuel states that one day David was hungry, so he sent his servants to a man in search of food but he brought him nothing, so he moved against him with his host to strike down this man and the people of his town. But then his wife came to meet him bringing food, cheese and drink, which she carried to him because she was afraid of him regarding her husband. He took this from her and was glad, and his anger was calmed and ebbed away.<sup>381</sup> This and the like from the prophets are not denied or condemned.

67r

Now the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) commanded the call to the single, eternal, victorious God by engendering desire and instilling fear, so that the religion should be one and the One who is worshiped should be single. Anyone who responded received what the Muslims did and had the responsibilities that they did, and anyone who did not respond to it and paid 'the poll-tax readily, being brought low',<sup>382</sup> spared his life with it, and protected status and obedience became his duty. He had a subtle point for reflection by the unbelievers, a humbling of their haughtiness and conceit, an invitation to the people of pride and defensiveness among them to move away from the vileness of humiliation and protected status to the exaltedness of honour and freedom. If they scorn this as well, war lies behind them.

Moses (peace be upon him) did what amounted to more than this, for when he was commanded to make the journey from Egypt and to lead the exodus of the People of Israel from there, he declared to them that God almighty was commanding every man of them to borrow the clothing of his neighbour and acquaintance, and the jewellery of his wives and daughters, and tell them that

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380 1 Samuel 27:8–12.

381 1 Samuel 25:2–35.

382 Q 9:29.

67v من | أعيادهم. ففعل القوم ذلك، وزينوهم بما عندهم، وأعاروهم ميسورهم  
ومعسورهم، وبنو إسرائيل يومئذ<sup>1</sup> زهاء ستمائة ألف مقاتل. فلما اجتمع ذلك  
عندهم وحصل في أيديهم، اتخذوا الليل جملاً وساروا عن<sup>2</sup> بكرة أبيهم. وفلق  
الله لهم البحر فعبروه، وطلبهم<sup>3</sup> فرعون فقاتوه،<sup>4</sup> وغرق الله<sup>5</sup> فرعون وأثلج  
صدورهم منه، وأصبح أصحاب تلك العواري ونسوانهم وفتيانهم<sup>6</sup> وقد صفرت  
من عواريهم، وأودت بذخائرهم عنقاء مغرب، وعضوا على أناملهم ندماً. فما  
كان ذلك محرماً ولا سحتاً، بل نفلاً وغنماً، لأنّ الدنيا لله عزّ وجلّ وملكها  
وزخارفها لمن اختصه بها من عباده كما قال في كتابه: "﴿تَوَتَّى الْمَلِكُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ  
الْمَلِكُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ﴾". فكم<sup>7</sup> أنّ من فعل ما ذكرنا من الأنبياء ليس بما زور ولا متحوب،  
بل على سبيل مغفرة ورضوان، فكذلك ما أمر الله به محمدًا صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>8</sup> من  
مجاهدة المشركين وشنّ الغارات على الكافرين. فلولوا الجهاد لما قام دين، ولا أمن  
حريم، ولا سدّ ثغر، ولصار المسلمون نفلاً وخولاً لأعدائهم. وقلّ ما تلبث الناس  
على ملّة هذه<sup>9</sup> حال أهلها حتى ينتقلوا إلى ما هو أعزّ وأوسع منها.

ولقد كان المسيح عليه السلام نهى عن الحرب وحذّر أسبابها في قوله: "مَنْ سَحَبَ  
مِيلاً فَانْسَحَبْ مَعَهُ مِيلَيْنِ، وَمَنْ سَلَبَكَ قَيْصُكَ فَادْفَعْ إِلَيْهِ رِءَاءَكَ أَيْضًا، وَمَنْ  
68r لَطَمَ خَدَّكَ فَخَوِّلْ إِلَيْهِ الْخَدَّ الْآخَرَ". فلما كان ذلك من الأمور التي لا يسلم عليها  
دين ولا دنيا اضطرّ أمته إلى أن اتسعوا إلى المعصية جهاراً، وأوقدوا نار<sup>10</sup> الحرب

<sup>1</sup>C and D: حينئذ <sup>2</sup>C and D: على <sup>3</sup>C and D: فطلبهم <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D:

وكما <sup>7</sup>C and D: وبناتهم <sup>6</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: <sup>5</sup>B omits this word. <sup>8</sup>نخافوه

أوامر المسيح لم يبق لأتمته <sup>10</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: هذا <sup>9</sup>C and D: صلعم <sup>8</sup>B: (with a note indicating the uncertainty of the reading of this phrase).

they wanted them for one of their festivals. | The people did this, adorning 67v  
 them with what they had and lending them what was easy and hard. On that  
 day the People of Israel were about six hundred thousand fighting-men in  
 number. When this was gathered to them and came into their hands, they  
 all made use of the night and left, every one of them. God parted the sea for  
 them and they crossed over, but Pharaoh came after them. They eluded him,  
 and God drowned Pharaoh and requited them of him. The owners of these  
 borrowed things and their wives and young men woke up to find they had been  
 deprived of their things which had been borrowed: a calamity<sup>383</sup> had destroyed  
 their treasures and they gnawed at their fingertips in anguish.<sup>384</sup> This was not  
 robbery or fraudulent gain but booty and plunder, because the earth is God's,  
 great and mighty, and its possessions and ornaments belong to those servants  
 of his to whom he particularly apportions them. As he says in his book, 'You  
 give sovereignty to whom you will and withdraw sovereignty from whom you  
 will.'<sup>385</sup> And just as the actions of the prophets we have mentioned were not  
 criminal or failing to hold back from sin, but of the form of 'forgiveness from  
 God and good pleasure',<sup>386</sup> so were the struggling against the polytheists and  
 the predatory raids against the unbelievers that God commanded Muḥammad  
 (may God bless him and give him peace). If there had been no sacred warfare,  
 no religion would have existed and no secure place would have been safe, no  
 gap would have been closed, and the Muslims would have become booty and  
 possessions for their enemies. People would hardly remain in a faith whose  
 people were in their condition, but would move to one that was stronger and  
 more capacious.

Christ (peace be upon him) forbade warfare and cautioned against its causes  
 in his words, 'Whoever makes you go a mile, go two miles with him; whoever  
 takes your coat, give him your cloak as well; whoever strikes your cheek, turn 68r  
 the other cheek to him.'<sup>387</sup> Since this was | among the matters on which neither  
 religion nor worldly existence can be secure, his nation was compelled to be  
 openly disobedient, and they kindled the fire of war in the east and the west,

383 For the meaning of *'anqā' mughrib*, see Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 2177, col. 1.

384 Cf. Exodus 11:2–15:21.

385 Q 3:26.

386 Q 57:20.

387 Matthew 5:39–40.

شرقاً وغرباً، وأرثوها تارثاً بالعوالي<sup>1</sup> والسيوف في<sup>2</sup> بلاد الروم وفرنجة والنوبة والأحابيش<sup>3</sup> وأرمينية، ومن منهم في بلاد الترك ما خلا من كان منهم منتشراً بين الأمم قليلاً قليلاً مثل النسطورية، ومن بين ظهراني العرب من اليعقوبية والملكية. ثم رأينا<sup>4</sup> المسيح عليه السلام قد رخص بأخرى في اتّخاذ السيوف ونسخ به الأمر الأول، وذلك في قوله لتلاميذه: "ليبع كل إمريء منكم ثوبه وليشتري لنفسه سيفاً"، وقوله:<sup>5</sup> "لا تظنّوا أنّي جئت لأزرع سلماً بل حرباً". فنّ عاب أهل الإسلام بما قد استحسّنه واستنّ به من ذكرنا من الأنبياء فقد ظلم.

فإن أنكر منكر قول النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>6</sup> أنّ في الآخرة أكلاً وشراباً، فقد ذكر المسيح عليه السلام لتلاميذه مثل ذلك حين شرب معهم وقال لهم: "إنّي لست شارباً من ابنة هذه الكرمة حتى أشربها معكم تارة أخرى في ملكوت السموات". فأخبر أنّ في الملكوت شراباً وشراباً، وحيث يكون فيه الشرب لا يُستنكر فيه المأكل واللذات. وقال لوقا في إنجيله عن المسيح عليه السلام إنّه قال: "ستأكلون وتشربون على مائدة أبي". وقال يوحنا عن المسيح عليه السلام: "إن<sup>7</sup> ما

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: بالحراب <sup>2</sup>C and D: حتى (wrongly). <sup>3</sup>Reading with B;

صلعم<sup>6</sup> B: وفي قوله <sup>5</sup>C and D: أن <sup>4</sup>C and D add: والتوران أهل الخليم illegible in A; C and D:

<sup>7</sup>D omits this word.

and brought it about through spears and swords in the lands of the Romans, the Franks, Nubia, the Ethiopians and Armenia. Who of them is there in the lands of the Turks, apart from those who were scattered among the nations in small numbers and humble circumstances, such as the Nestorians, and among the Zahrānī Arabs the Jacobites and Melkites?<sup>388</sup> We have seen that Christ (peace be upon him) elsewhere allowed swords to be taken, and with this abrogated the first command; this was in his words to his disciples, 'Each one of you must sell his garment and buy himself a sword',<sup>389</sup> and his words, 'Do not think that I have come to sow peace but war.'<sup>390</sup> So whoever finds fault with the people of Islam is in error because of what the prophets we have mentioned have thought right and have prescribed.

If someone should deny the words of the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) that in the hereafter are food and drink,<sup>391</sup> Christ (peace be upon him) said something similar to his disciples when he was drinking with them. He said to them, 'I will not drink of the produce of this vine until I drink it with you again in the Kingdom of heaven.'<sup>392</sup> So he was declaring that in the Kingdom there is drinking and drink, and since there is drink there, eating and delights there cannot be denied. Luke says in his Gospel that Christ (peace be upon him) said, 'You shall eat and drink at my Father's table.'<sup>393</sup> And John says from Christ (peace be upon him), 'There are very many rooms and dwelling

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388 Mingana, *Religion and empire*, p. 156, n. 4, identifies the Zahrānī Arabs as Turanians. At this time, Nestorian missionaries were vigorously active along the Silk Road and throughout Asia, while there were substantial populations of Christians from all denominations within the Islamic empire. Of course, none of these would be rulers, and many would be *dhimmīs*.

389 Luke 22:36

390 Matthew 10:34.

391 The teachings in the Qur'ān about the physical pleasures of heaven were a favourite topic in Christian polemical works in the early centuries of Islam (see *CMR* 1, e.g. pp. 376, 382). The Nestorian Christian 'Ammār al-Baṣrī, who was probably active in the decades just before the time of 'Alī's conversion, rejects the idea in his *Kitāb al-burhān* and *Kitāb al-masā'il wa-l-aḡwiba* (M. Hayek, *'Ammār al-Baṣrī. Apologie et controverses*, Beirut, 1977, pp. 88–90, 264–265), while the Muslim Ḥumayd ibn Sa'īd ibn Bakhtiyār, who was also probably a contemporary, devoted a whole work to the matter, his lost *Kitāb 'alā l-Naṣārā fī l-na'im wa-l-akl wa-l-shurb fī l-ākhirā wa 'alā jamī' man qāla bi-ḡiddi dhālika*, 'Against the Christians on felicity and eating and drinking in the hereafter, and against whoever teaches in opposition to this' (see *CMR* 1, pp. 723–725).

392 Matthew 26:29.

393 Luke 22:30.

68v أكثر الغرف والمساكن عند أبي". فهذه كلّها تصحّح الأكل والشرب في الآخرة والغرف والنعيم والجلوس على الأرائك متقابلين<sup>1</sup> كما قال الله عز وجل في كتابه: ﴿وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ﴾<sup>2</sup>

في الردّ على مَنْ أنكر مخالفة النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>3</sup> موسى والمسيح عليهما السلام في تغيير سنن التوراة والإنجيل

وإن ذكر ذاكر منهم من المتعمّقين في العلم أنّ النبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم<sup>4</sup> آمن بالتوراة والإنجيل قولاً وخالفهما فعلاً، فكان في ثبوتيه إياهما مرّة وتكذيبه بما فيهما<sup>5</sup> أخرى دليل على التناقض، قلنا إنّ الله تبارك وتعالى حكيم عليم رحمان رحيم، الخلق له والمرشد<sup>6</sup> منه، والحول والقوّة به، وليس للعباد الإعتراض عليه فيما يأمر به والدخول في سابق علمه وخفيّ تدبيره، بل الإنقياد والسمع. فقد قال الله عز وجل على لسان موسى عليه السلام: "إنّ الله يقيم نبياً من بين إخوانكم مثلي فاسمعوا له، فإنّ مَنْ لم يسمع له كنتُ أنا المنتقم منه".

فقد ظهر النبيّ عليه السلام من بين إخوة اليهود، واستنّ بسنن الله، وصدّق بموسى وقال: "إنّه كليّم الله"، وبعبسى وقال: "إنّه روح الله وكلمته"،<sup>7</sup> اصطفاه الله وشرفه ورفعته إلى السماء، فهو عنده. ولم يخالف موسى في التوحيد ولم يحجمهم ولم يهملهم، كما فعلت النصاري، بل باح به وصرّح، وأخلص الإيمان وجرّد القول، ووافقه سائر الأنبياء في القبلّة والزواج<sup>8</sup> والطلاق

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit: والجلوس على الأرائك متقابلين <sup>2</sup>Reading with C

and D; illegible in A; this verse is lacking in B. <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>B: صلعم <sup>5</sup>B: فيها <sup>6</sup>B: والرشد <sup>7</sup>B:

كلمته <sup>8</sup>A: والأزواج; C and D omit this word.

places with my Father.<sup>394</sup> All this proves the correctness of food, | drink, rooms, 68v  
 comfort and reclining on couches facing each other<sup>395</sup> in the hereafter; as  
 God, great and mighty, says in his book, 'They shall have gardens in which are  
 everlasting comfort.'<sup>396</sup>

**The refutation of those who censure the Prophet's (may God bless  
 him and give him peace) contravention of Moses and Christ (peace  
 be upon them) in changing the rules of the Torah and Gospel**

If any of them who has deep proficiency in knowledge suggests that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) accepted the Torah and Gospel in word but denied them in action, and thus his confirming the two of them at one moment but disbelieving what they contain at another is proof of self-contradictoriness, we say that God is blessed, almighty, wise, knowing, compassionate, merciful, the creation is his, guidance is from him, strength and power are in him, and it is not for humans to rebel against him in what he commands, or intrude into his prevenient knowledge or his hidden governance, but to obey and listen. God, great and mighty, said on the tongue of Moses (peace be upon him), 'God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers, so listen to him. Whoever does not listen to him, I will have vengeance upon him.'<sup>397</sup>

Now the Prophet (peace be upon him) appeared from among the brothers of the Jews; he instituted the rules of God, and was true to Moses, saying that he was 'the one spoken to by God'.<sup>398</sup> Concerning Jesus, he said that he was a spirit from God and his word,<sup>399</sup> that God chose him and ennobled him, and exalted him to heaven<sup>400</sup> and he is in his presence. He did not contravene Moses in affirming oneness, and he did not falter or mumble as the Christians do, but he made it known, announced it clearly, purified the faith, spoke without embellishment, and all the prophets agreed with him on the direction of

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394 John 14:2.

395 Q 56:16.

396 Q 9:21.

397 Deuteronomy 18:18–19.

398 Q 4:164. (cf. Q 7:143).

399 Q 4:171.

400 Q 4:158.

69r واختان ومحاربة الكفرة | والذبّ عن البيضة<sup>1</sup> والقصاص، وأكثر الذبائح والإقسام<sup>2</sup> بالله<sup>3</sup> تعالى وحده، وجدّد لأُمَّته سنناً وفرائض تعبد الله بها أهل زمانه،<sup>4</sup> فعلى العباد السمع والطاعة لله فيه. ولو كان للناس مساع إلى التثريب<sup>5</sup> والإغتمار في مثل ذلك من أمور الله وتدييره، لكان للقاتل أن يقول ممّا جاء به<sup>6</sup> المسيح أيضاً أنه صدّق بالتوراة مرّة وقال: "لم أجيء لأنقضها بل لأتمّمها"، وقال أيضاً: "حقاً أقول إنّه لا يبطل حرف منها حتى تبطل السماء والأرض"، ثمّ خالف موسى صراحاً، ونبذ التوراة جانباً، حتى وجد علماء أُمَّته سبيلاً<sup>7</sup> إلى أن قالوا مصرّحين جاهرين إنّ العتيقة قد<sup>8</sup> غبرت وسلفت، وجاءت الحديثة وظهرت. يعنون بالعتيقة التوراة ونواميسها وسائر كتب الأنبياء، وبالحدیثة الإنجيل وكتب الحواريين. وإثماً عماد التوراة وملاك اليهودية سننها<sup>9</sup> وختانها وذبائحها وأعيادها وقصاصها وأحكامها وكهنّتها ومذابحها، وقد<sup>10</sup> أهدر المسيح عليه السلام ذلك كلّه وأزهقه، فلم يدع لهم عيداً إلاّ أبطله، ولا سبتاً إلاّ حلّه، ولا ختناً إلاّ دمّث في رفضه، ولا ذبيحة إلاّ نهى عنها، ولا مذبحاً إلاّ عطّله، ولا كاهناً إلاّ فجّره وفسّقه.

قال متى في الفصل الثالث عشر إنّ المسيح عليه السلام كان يسير بين الزروع في يوم سبت، فجاع تلامذته فجعلوا يفركون السنبل ويأكلونه. فلم يغيّر ذلك ولم ينكره.

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: [البنين]. <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D omit this word. <sup>3</sup>C and D: الله <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: الله (with a note indicating the uncertainty of the reading of these words). <sup>5</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: المثالب <sup>6</sup>Reading with A and B; C and D: عليه (sic). <sup>7</sup>C and D: سبباً <sup>8</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>9</sup>C and D: وسنّها (wrongly). <sup>10</sup>C and D: فقد



prayer, marriage, divorce, circumcision, resisting unbelievers, | defending land and requital. He increased sacrifices and oaths by God the almighty alone, and renewed for his community rules and regulations by which the people of his time devoted themselves to the service of God, so that humans had to listen to and obey God through him. If people had the possibility of blaming and disparaging such things as these in the commands and ordaining of God, then someone could say about what Christ has said as well, that he was true to the Torah at one time and said, 'I have not come to destroy it but to complete it', and he also said, 'Truly I say that not a letter of it will be destroyed until heaven and earth are destroyed';<sup>401</sup> then later he openly contravened Moses and rejected the Torah outright so that the experts of his community found a way to say openly and directly that the old had gone and passed away and the new had arrived and appeared. By 'the old' they meant the Torah and its laws, and all the books of the prophets, and by 'the new' the Gospel and the books of the disciples. The mainstay of the Torah and basis of Judaism are its rules, its circumcision, its sacrifices, festivals, retaliations, laws, priests and altars, all these Christ (peace be upon him) made void and overthrew. He left them no festival without cancelling it, Sabbath without rescinding it, circumcision without gently ending it, sacrifice without rejecting it, an altar without ending its service, a priest without saying he was adulterous and dissolute.

69r

Matthew says in Chapter 13 that Christ (peace be upon him) was walking among the crops on a Sabbath day, and his disciples were hungry so they began to rub the ears of grain and eat them. He did not correct this or

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401 Matthew 5:17–18.

69v وقال متى في هذا الفصل إنَّ المسيح قال يوماً<sup>1</sup> لمن حضره من بني إسرائيل: "سمعتُم التوراة تقول إنَّ من طلق امرأته فليكتب<sup>2</sup> لها كتاب الطلاق، أمّا أنا فأقول لكم إنَّ من طلق امرأته إلّا بسبب<sup>3</sup> الزنا فقد<sup>4</sup> عرّضها للزنا، وإنَّ من تزوّج مطلّقة فكان<sup>5</sup> قد فجر. وللقائل أن يقول منكرًا لهذا القول: "فما يصنع بمن سحرت أو كفرت أو سمّت أباه<sup>6</sup> أو قتلت ولدها أو جارتها؟<sup>7</sup> أيطلّقها بتلك الخصال؟ فكيف لم يذكر<sup>8</sup> ذلك؟ وإنما أوجب الطلاق على الزنا فقط.

وقال في هذا الفصل: "قد سمعتُم ما قيل في التنزيل إنَّ السنَّ بالسنِّ والعين بالعين، فأما أنا فإنّي أقول لكم إنَّ من ضربك على خدك فولّه الخد الآخر، ومن سألك شيئاً فلا تمنعه". وقال فولس، وهو المقدم المطاع عندهم: "إنّه<sup>9</sup> ليس الختان بشيء، ولا الغرلة بشيء"، فأبطل بذلك الختان صراحاً. فهذه وغيرها من المسيح صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>10</sup> غير منكر ولا مردود. وكذلك ما جدّد النبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم<sup>11</sup> من السنن أو زاد أو نقص من سنن التوراة والإنجيل غير مستنكر ولا مذموم.

في الردّ على من زعم أن القيامة لم يذكرها أحد غير المسيح عليه السلام

وقد قالت النصارى إنّه لم يعرف القيامة ولم يبشّر بالبعثة والنشور غير المسيح،<sup>12</sup> وقد لعمرى بشّر بها وصرّح بالقول فيها وشرفّه الله تشریفاً يفوق السبقة، غير أنّ

<sup>1</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: مؤمناً (?) <sup>2</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D:

<sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: لسبب <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: [فليقدم]

<sup>5</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: فإنّه <sup>6</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D:

ولم <sup>7</sup>So in A and B; C and D: جاءها (wrongly). <sup>8</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D:

عليه السلام: <sup>12</sup>B adds: صلعم <sup>11</sup>B: صلعم <sup>10</sup>B: أن C and D: <sup>9</sup>C and D: يمكن (wrongly).

censure it.<sup>402</sup> And Matthew says in this Chapter that one day Christ said to the people of Israel who | were with him, 'You have heard the Torah say that whoever divorces his wife must write a note of divorce for her, but I say to you that whoever divorces his wife except for reason of fornication has exposed her to fornication, and whoever marries a divorced woman has committed adultery.'<sup>403</sup> Someone might say in blame of these words, 'What should he do about a woman who practises witchcraft or is an unbeliever or poisons her father or kills her child or her neighbour? May he divorce her for these matters?' But how is it that he never mentioned this, since he only made divorce permissible for fornication alone.

In this Chapter he said, 'You have heard what is said in scripture, a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye, but I say to you that he who hits you on your cheek turn to him the other cheek, and he who asks something of you do not refuse him.'<sup>404</sup> And Paul, in their eyes the chief one to be obeyed, said, 'Circumcision is nothing and the foreskin is nothing',<sup>405</sup> and by this he plainly invalidated circumcision. These and other things from Christ (may God bless him and give him peace) cannot be denied or rejected. In the same way, the rules that the Prophet (may God bless him and give him peace) introduced anew, or added to or removed from the rules of the Torah or Gospel should not be denied or criticised.

**The refutation of those who have claimed that no one has mentioned the resurrection apart from Christ (peace be upon him)**

The Christians have said that no one has made known the resurrection or brought news of the rising up and the return from the dead except Christ. Indeed, he announced it and spoke about it directly, and God has bestowed upon him honour surpassing those before him, although prophets before him

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402 Matthew 12:1–3.

403 Matthew 5:31–32.

404 Matthew 5: 38–39, 42.

405 1 Corinthians 7:19.

70r الأنبياء قبله قد كانوا | يعرفونها ويذكرونها. قال موسى النبيّ عن الله تعالى: "أنا وحدي وليس سواي إله، أنا أميت وأنا أحيي". وهذا داوود النبيّ عليه السلام<sup>1</sup> يقول في الزبور: "إنّ الجبابرة يُبعثون وينشرون، ويحجّون لك يا ربّ، ويخبرون أنّ في القبور نعمتك". وقال الله تبارك وتعالى على لسانه: "إنيّ ناشرهم وباعثهم من بين أسنان السباع ومن لجج البحر". وقد قال دانيال النبيّ عليه السلام: "إنّه سيبعث من الأحداث قوم كثير، بعضهم إلى الحياة الدائمة، وبعضهم إلى البوار لتوبيخ نظرائهم إلى الأبد". وقالت حنّة النبيةّ عليها السلام في كتاب<sup>2</sup> إشموئيل النبيّ عليه السلام: "إنّ الربّ يميت ويحيي وينزل إلى القبر وينشر منه". وقد قال غيرهم من الأنبياء في ذلك قولاً نيراً كثيراً<sup>3</sup>. قال<sup>4</sup> الله عزّ وجلّ لدانيال عليه السلام: "إذهب واضطجع<sup>5</sup> للأمر المحتوم، فإنّك ستقوم في الوقت الموقت لك في آخر الدهر".

وقد علمتم—يهديكم الله—أنّ إجماعنا وإجماعكم على أنّ الله عدل يحبّ العدل وأهله ويأمر به، وينهى عن الحيف والجور. ومن العدل والنصفة أن ترجعوا إلى الأسباب التي بها قبلتم [دينكم] وتنظروا ما هي. فإذا صحّ عندكم أنّها ليست إلّا أخباراً ممكنة غير ممتعة، ومحمودة غير مذمومة، أدّاها إليكم خلف عن سلف وآخر عن أوّل، فبمثل تلك الأخبار قبلنا النبيّ عليه السلام. على أنّ من أدّى تلك | الأخبار إليكم لم يكن فيهم أحد ادّعى أنّه أخذها عن من شاهد المسيح 70v أو موسى عليهما السلام من آبائهما وأجداده كما تدّعي العرب عن آبائهما وأجدادهما الذين شاهدوا النبيّ عليه السلام، فإنّ الرجل منهم يحدث<sup>6</sup> عن جدّه أو جدّ جدّه أو بعض أهله بما رأى وأدّاه إلى أعقابه. فأما أخباركم فإنّها أدّاها إليكم عمراقيّ عن

<sup>1</sup>C and D omit: عليه السلام <sup>2</sup>B: كتب <sup>3</sup>B, C and D omit the following sentence: وقد قال غيرهم

(wrongly). يحدثه <sup>6</sup>C and D: اضطجع <sup>5</sup>B: وقال <sup>4</sup>B: من الأنبياء في ذلك قولاً نيراً كثيراً

were | aware of it and referred to it. The prophet Moses said from God almighty, 'I am alone and there is no god apart from me; I cause to die and I cause to live.'<sup>406</sup> And David the prophet himself says in the Psalms, 'The tyrants will be raised up and restored from the dead, and will praise you, O Lord, and will declare that your grace is in the graves.'<sup>407</sup> And God, blessed and exalted, says on his tongue, 'I will cause them to return and raise them from the very teeth of lions and from the depths of the sea.'<sup>408</sup> And the prophet Daniel (peace be upon him) says, 'Many people will be raised from the graves, some to everlasting life and some to perdition as a reproach to their like forever.'<sup>409</sup> Hannah the prophetess (peace be upon her) in the Book of the prophet Samuel (peace be upon him) said, 'The Lord causes to die and causes to live, he sends down to the grave and raises up from it.'<sup>410</sup> Other prophets have said many clear things about this. God, great and mighty, said to Daniel (peace be upon him), 'Go and lie down under the command decreed, for you will rise up at the time allotted to you at the close of days.'<sup>411</sup>

You know, may God guide you, that our agreement and yours is that God is just and loves justice and those who follow it; he commands it and forbids injustice and oppression. And justice and fairness demand that you examine your reasons for accepting [your religion] and consider what they are. If it proves to be the case with you that they are reports and nothing more, that they are possible and not impermissible, praiseworthy and not unacceptable, conveyed to you by a successor from a predecessor and a later person from an earlier, then similarly by such reports we accepted the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, those who conveyed | these reports to you did not include among themselves any who claimed to have received them from anyone among his fathers or grandfathers who witnessed Christ or Moses (peace be upon them), in the way that the Arabs claim from their fathers and grandfathers who witnessed the Prophet (peace be upon him). For one of their men can relate from his grandfather or his grandfather's grandfather or one of his family what he saw and conveyed to his descendants. But your reports have been conveyed

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<sup>406</sup> Deuteronomy 32:39.

<sup>407</sup> Psalm 88:10.

<sup>408</sup> Psalm 68:22.

<sup>409</sup> Daniel 12:2.

<sup>410</sup> 1 Samuel 2:6.

<sup>411</sup> Daniel 12:13.

جزريّ، وجزريّ<sup>1</sup> عن شاميّ، وشاميّ عن عبرانيّ، وفارسيّ عن روميّ، ومشرقيّ عن مغربيّ، بأسباب مظلمة متفاوتة. فبماذا تحتجّون أو تعيّنون<sup>2</sup> على من قال إنّما قبلتُ هذا الدّين وآمنتُ به بمثل الدلائل والشواهد التي قبلتم بها دينكم، أو قال إنّني لما رأيتُ أمةً من الأمم عظيمة الشأن، جليّة الخطب في كثرتها وعزّها وطهارتها وفظنها وعفّتها، يخبرونا عن آباءهم وأجدادهم بما ذكرنا، ويأتون بكتّاب يتوارثونه قرنًا فقرنًا، يدعو إلى توحيد الله وتكبيره، والإيمان برسله وأنبيائه، والتكذيب بالشركاء والأنداد، ويأمر بحاسن الأمور ومعاليها، وبما يوافق سنن الأنبياء ومواريث عهودها، وينهي عن الشرّ وأهله وأصله، ويخبرنا بأحداث قد صحّت في زمان بعد زمان وحقبة بعد حقبة. ثم وجدتُ<sup>3</sup> كتب من يؤمنون به من الأنبياء تشهد له، وتنبأ على دولته ودينه بما قد بيناه، فدخلتُ فيه وأمّلتُ ما عند الله به.

فإن زعمتم أنّ من كان هذا نعته ونبوّته وفضله ودلائله لا يجب قبوله، بطل جميع ما تدعون، وصرتم إلى الكفر بكلّ ما به تؤمنون. <sup>71r</sup> فإنّ اعتلّتم بالثنويّة والوثنيّة ونظرائهم، وما ينقلون عن أئمّتهم ويخبرون عن دعائهم وغواتهم، وما يوجد في زبرهم وأسفارهم من تحقيق أخبارهم، فقد تقدّم من قولنا في ذلك في صدر الكتاب ما لا يتصامّ عنه إلّا من كان همه المحاجة والشغب ودينه المعاندة والإصرار. لأنّ أولئك قد ناقضوا ودعوا إلى النجاسات والضلالات، فضلّوا وأشركوا بالله فهلكوا. ولا يُقاس أمثالهم بمن كان إمامه الحقّ، ومنهجه الرشد، وشعاره التألّه والزهد، ودعوته إلى إله واحد فرد، إله إبراهيم وسائر الأنبياء عليهم السلام، ومن تنبأ الأنبياء عليه بما قد وضح.

<sup>1</sup>B, C and D omit this word. <sup>2</sup>B: وتعيّنون <sup>3</sup>Reading with C and D; A and B: وجدنا

to you by an 'Irāqī from an Arabian, and an Arabian from a Syrian and a Syrian from a Hebrew, a Persian from a Roman, an easterner from a westerner through dark and divers means. So how then can you argue or set yourselves against those who say, 'I have accepted this religion and believe in it on similar proofs and testimonies that you have accepted yours', or who says, 'When I saw that one of the communities was in a powerful position and exalted circumstances in its number, greatness, purity, intelligence and virtue, declaring to us from their fathers and grandfathers what we have related, and presenting a book they have inherited century after century, which calls to proclaim the oneness and greatness of God, to believe in his messengers and prophets, and to reject associates and partners, which commands what is meritorious and noble and what accords with the rules of the prophets and the legacies of their covenants, which forbids evil, its exponents and roots, and addresses us in discourses that have proved true time after time and age after age, when I found the books of the prophets whom you believe in witnessing to him and foretelling his empire and religion, as we have made clear, I entered it and through it put my hope in what is from God'?<sup>412</sup>

If you claim that there is no necessity to accept a man with this description, prophethood, graciousness and proofs, all that you claim is overturned and you are driven off to unbelief with all you believe. | If you appeal to dualism and idolatry and the like, what they pass on from their leaders and declare from their preachers and beguilers, and what is to be found in their psalmodies and writings to confirm their reports, we have already said things about this at the beginning of the book to which no one can be deaf except someone whose concern is obstruction and dissension and whose religion is obstinacy and wilfulness. For these people seek to contradict and call to impurity and deviation, so they deviate and associate others with God, and they are obliterated. They cannot be compared with a man whose leader was truth, whose way forward was guidance, whose emblem was devotion to God and abstinence and whose call was to one, single God, the God of Abraham and all the prophets (peace be upon them), and whom the prophets foretold, as has been made clear.

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412 There is undoubtedly some autobiographical sentiment in this rhetorical question.

فذرّوا التّظنّي والإعتلال با بني عمّي—تلاقاكم الله—واسلكوا أسلم الطرق وأهداها، وجانبوا أضلّها وأرداها. فإنّكم إذا تدبّرتُم ذلك، صحّ لكم أنّ الأسباب والعلل التي بها قبلنا نحن نبوّة النبيّ عليه السلام، هي أسبابكم وعللكم التي بها قبلتم المسيح وموسى عليهما السلام. فإنّ كما نحن في ذلك مخطئين، ولعقوبة الله<sup>1</sup> متعرّضين، فكذلك أنتم أيضًا. فناظروا أنفسكم، وحاكمونا إلى عقولكم وأذهانكم، واحتجّوا لنا ولكم وعلينا وعلى أنفسكم، لينكشف عنكم الغطاء، وترون عين اليقين بتوفيق الله.

وإنّ عاب النبيّ عليه السلام<sup>2</sup> عائب فقال: "إنّ عليه السلام<sup>3</sup> نسب الشرّ إلى الله، فقد قال في عدل الله ورحمته وطوله ما قد ذكرته في صدر هذا الكتاب. وقال 7iv الله تبارك وتعالى لموسى عليه السلام: "إنيّ جاعل قلب فرعون قاسياً لئلا يخرجكم من أرض مصر". وقال أشعيا النبيّ عليه السلام: "إنّ الله خلق السلامة وبراً للخير والشرّ جميعاً". وقال فولس المقدّم عندكم<sup>4</sup> المطاع<sup>5</sup> في رسالته إلى طيماتاوس: "إنّ البيت العظيم ليس يكون فيه أواني الفضة والذهب فقط، بل يكون فيه أواني الخشب والفخار أيضًا منها للكرامة ومنها للهوان"، يعني الدنيا ومن فيها من سعيد وشقيّ.

وأنا سائلكم—يرشدكم الله—في خاتمة كتابي هذا عن مسألة جامعة قاطعة مقنعة: ما تقولون في وارد لو وردَ هذا الإقليم من أفق الهند أو الصين،<sup>6</sup> يرتاد رشدًا ويسأل عن الأديان التي فيه، ويستخبر عن ملل<sup>7</sup> أهله؟ فقيل له إنّ منهم أهل ملّة يُسمّون المجوس يعبدون الكواكب والنيران، ويزعمون أنّ الله خالق الخيرات والنور،

<sup>1</sup>B adds: تعالى <sup>2</sup>B: صلعم <sup>3</sup>B: صلعم <sup>4</sup>C and D: عندهم (wrongly); B omits this word. <sup>5</sup>B:

المطاع عندكم <sup>6</sup>C and D: والصين (wrongly). <sup>7</sup>C and D: سلك (wrongly).



So, throw aside conjecture and pretence, my cousins, may God bring you closer to him, and follow the safest and best signposted of roads and avoid the ones that are most delusive and ominous. If you set yourselves to do this, you will certainly find that the reasons and causes by which we ourselves have accepted the prophethood of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are the reasons and causes by which you have accepted Christ and Moses (peace be upon them). Hence, if in this we have been wrong, open to God's punishment and renegades, then so are you as well. So examine yourselves, interrogate us before your minds and intellects, produce arguments for us and yourselves and against us and yourselves, so that what covers you may be lifted away and you will see certainty itself with the help of God.

If anyone should find fault with the Prophet (peace be upon him), and say that he (peace be upon him) linked evil with God, well he spoke about God's justice, mercy and might, as I have mentioned at the beginning of this | book. God, blessed and almighty, said to Moses (peace be upon him), 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart so that he will not let you go out from the land of Egypt.'<sup>413</sup> The prophet Isaiah (peace be upon him) says, 'God has created security and has brought into being good and bad together.'<sup>414</sup> Paul, in your eyes the foremost in being obeyed, says in his Letter to Timothy, 'A great house does not contain vessels of only silver and gold, but in addition it contains vessels of wood and clay, some of them for honour and some for shame.'<sup>415</sup> He means the world, and the joyful and miserable who are in it.

71V

At the end of this book of mine, I will ask you, may God guide you, a comprehensive, conclusive and convincing question. What would you say about someone who arrived in this region from as far away as India or China seeking for guidance, asking about the religions that are here and wanting to know about the faiths of its people? He is told that among them are people of a faith named Magians, who worship the stars and fires and claim that God is the Creator of what is good and the light, and Satan is the creator of what is dark and the

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<sup>413</sup> Exodus 7:3–4

<sup>414</sup> Isaiah 45:7.

<sup>415</sup> 2 Timothy 2:20.

والشيطان خالق الظلمات والشرّ، وأنّ الحرب غير راكدة بينهما لا يستريحان ولا يسكنان، على أنّهما لا يبلغان ما يريدان، فهما عاجزان مبهوتان، وإنّ محبة الله ورضاه في نكاح الأمّهات والبنات، والتطهر بأبوال البقر المنتنة، والإعتكاف على المجون والزفن، وإنّ أرواح موتاهم ترجع إليهم في كلّ سنة مرّة، فهي ترأّ ممّا يوضع لها من مطعم ومشرب، وتتزوّد منه عند انصرافها، وهنّات من نحو ما ذكرنا في صدر الكتاب مجهولة، وسير مستقدرة، ونقمت من الله فيهم<sup>1</sup> ظاهرة، | ونبوّات قد نطقت بها كتب الأنبياء فيهم قديمة، قد بينتها آنفاً.

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وأنّ منهم قوماً يُقال لهم الزنادقة، دينهم يضاهي دين هؤلاء، ويتقدّمه ضلالة وجهالة وقدراً ونجاسة وخساراً.

ومنهم أهل ملّة يُسمّون النصاري، منهم طائفة تزعم أنّ الله لما رأى الشيطان قد علا شأنه، واستفحل أمره، وعجز الأنبياء عن مناواته، وجّه<sup>2</sup> ابناً له أزلياً قديماً منفرداً بخلق الخلائق كلّها، فدخل في بطن امرأة، ثمّ وُلد منها ونشأ وناهض الشيطان، فأخذه الشيطان وقتله ثمّ صلبه على أيدي شرذمة من أحزابه. وقالت طائفة منهم: بل المقتول هيكّل هذا الإبن ومسكنه، لأنّه صار مع ذلك الإنسان شيئاً واحداً، فأكل ذلك القديم بأكل ذلك الحديث، وتغوّط بتردّده وتغوّطه<sup>3</sup> وقُتل بقتله.

ومنهم أهل ملّة يُسمّون اليهود، في أيديهم كتب قوم يُسمّونهم أنبياء، ويحكون عنهم أنّهم قد لعنوه، ويذكرون أنّ الله قد تبرّأ منهم ومقت دينهم، وشرّد بهم<sup>4</sup> في الآفاق، وأطفأ نورهم، وأقسم أنّه لا يعطف أبداً عليهم.

دهمّ وشر: 4B وتغويطه: 3C and D. وجد: 2C and D. 1C and D omit this word

bad; that battle never ceases between them and they never stop or rest, though they never gain what they want, they are both incapable and bewildered; that God's desire and pleasure is for intercourse with mothers and daughters, in purifying with the fetid urine of cows, and in dedication to shameless behaviour and cavorting; that the spirits of their dead return to them once every year, and take the food and drink that is put before them and help themselves to more of it for their journey away; and little-known practices such as we have mentioned at the beginning of the book, filthy behaviour, and afflictions clearly among them from God, | and ancient prophecies against them of which the books of the prophets speak, as I have shown above.

72r

Among them are people called Manichaeans,<sup>416</sup> whose religion is like the religion of these people, though it goes beyond it in deviation, ignorance, impurity, filthiness and depravity.

Among them are people of a faith called Christians. Among them are a group who claim that when God saw that Satan's power was supreme, his rule was beyond control, and the prophets were powerless to resist him, he sent his timeless, eternal Son, without peer among all creatures. He entered a woman's womb and was born of her and grew, and he confronted Satan, but Satan seized him and killed him and then he crucified him at the hands of a small gang of his supporters.<sup>417</sup> A group of them say that the one killed was the temple of this Son and his dwelling place,<sup>418</sup> because he became one with this human, so that this eternal being ate the food of this temporal being, he relieved himself by his retreating and relieving himself, and he was killed by his being killed.

Among them are people of a faith called Jews. In their hands are books of men they call prophets, and they relate from them that they condemned them. They say that God has withdrawn from them, he detests their religion, he has driven them into distant places, he has extinguished their light and has sworn that he will never turn back to them.

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<sup>416</sup> Literally *zindīqs*.

<sup>417</sup> Cf. al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, *Radd*, pp. 317–318, explicitly ascribing this story to all Christian groups.

<sup>418</sup> The Patriarch Timothy I employs this typically Nestorian metaphor in his debate with al-Mahdī (Mingana, 'Apology', p. 163), while 'Alī's contemporaries, the Nestorian 'Ammār al-Baṣrī (Hayek, *Apologie et controverses*, pp. 194, 196) and the Muslim Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq (Thomas, *Against the Incarnation*, pp. 88–89, 166–169), both refer to it.

ومنهم أهل هذه الملة الطاهرة العالية الذين يُقال لهم المسلمون، يقولون إنَّ الله فرد دائم لا شريك له ولا غالب، بل له الجبروت والملك الدائم، لا ولد له ولا والد، وهو الرحمن الرحيم الأول الآخر،<sup>1</sup> وإنَّ نبيهم فرض عليهم عن الله بر الوالدين، والصوم والصلاة والنقاء والطهارة، وحلَّ لهم الطيبات وحرم الخبيثات، ووعد الجنة وحذر النار.

فأيُّ هذه الملل والأديان كان يجب<sup>2</sup> أن يؤمن به ذلك الهندي أو<sup>3</sup> الصيني؟ وإلى أيها كان يركن؟ وأيها يستحسن إذا كان وافر الرأي، سليم الطبع، مريداً للحق المحض لا غيره؟ أو ما حجة الله على عبد من عباده لو قال له، وهو العدل الرحمن الذي لا يظلم مثقال ذرة أحداً: "إلهي إنِّي سمعت منادياً ينادي إلى توحيدك ويكبرك ويمجِّدك ويمجِّدك، فأجبتُ"، ورأيتُهُ يأمر<sup>4</sup> بالإيمان بأنبيائك وأصفيائك، ويفرض<sup>5</sup> الصلاة والصوم والزكاة، فأطعتُ. ورأيتُهُ قد قطع إرباً من آرابي وآراب كرائي وأحبائي، فقطعتُ تأملاً لما عندك وتذلاً لأمرك، ورأيتُهُ يحثُّ على الحجِّ من البلد الشاسع البعيد، فحججتُ وأتيتُ ثمَّ ما<sup>6</sup> ونيتُ. ورأيتُهُ يحضُّ على جهاد أعدائك الكافرين بك ودعائهم إليك،<sup>7</sup> فدعوتُ وجاهدتُ وابتغيْتُ بذلك كله وجهك، فما نهيتُ ولا مللتُ. ورأيتُ أدياناً ومملاً مستنكرةً مجهولة، على ما شرحتُ آنفاً، فأطرحْتُ ذلك كله جانباً وتبرأتُ منه، وتعلَّقتُ بما ظننتُ أنَّه العروة الوثقى والمنهج الأقوم الذي يرضيك. فإنَّ كنتُ إلهي<sup>8</sup> قد جهلتُ فيما اخترتُ وتياسرتُ عمّا نويتُ، فإنَّك أحقُّ من رحِم عبده الذي استفرغ في طلب ما عندك جهده، فأخطأ السبيل إليك.

<sup>1</sup>C and D: الآخر <sup>2</sup>C and D: يُحبَّ (wrongly). <sup>3</sup>C and D: الصيني <sup>4</sup>C and D: يأمرنا (wrongly).

<sup>5</sup>B: يفرض <sup>6</sup>C and D: وما (wrongly). <sup>7</sup>B omits this word. <sup>8</sup>B omits this word.

Among them are the people of this pure, exalted faith who are called Muslims. They say that God is single, everlasting, with no partner and no one victorious other than him but his is the power and everlasting kingdom, he has no son or parent, the compassionate, the merciful, the first, the last. Their Prophet ordained for them from God devotion to parents, fasting, worship, cleanliness, purity, made holy for them things that are acceptable, prohibited them things that are unclean, promised them paradise and warned of the fire.

So, which | of these faiths and religions should this Indian or Chinese believe in, which would he subscribe to, and which would he think acceptable if he was fully able to decide, stable of character, desirous of absolute truth and nothing else? Or what would be God's argument against one of his servants if he were to say to him, just and compassionate as he is and 'never unjust in the least degree'<sup>419</sup> to anyone, 'My God, I have heard a herald summoning to your oneness, declaring your greatness, praising you and glorifying you, and I have responded. I have seen that he commands belief in your prophets and pure ones, and enjoins worship, fasting and alms-giving, and I have obeyed. And I have seen that he cut one of my members and the members of those who are precious and beloved to me, so I cut them in the hope of what is in your keeping and in humble obedience to your command.'<sup>420</sup> And I saw that he commanded the pilgrimage from far, distant lands, so I made the pilgrimage and went, without slackening at all. I saw that he urged fighting against your enemies, those who do not believe in you, and calling them to you, so I made the call and I fought and strove in all this for you, neither holding back nor letting up. And I saw religions and faiths that had no awareness or knowledge of what I have just explained, so I cast it all aside and had nothing to do with it, and I clung onto what I thought was the most substantial link and the most direct way forward, which would please you. My God, if I have been ignorant in what I have chosen and have followed the easier course, you are the most truthful One who will have mercy on his servant who has tried his utmost to seek what is with you, but has mistaken the way to you.'

72v

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419 Q 4:40.

420 This is evidently a reference to circumcision, which a convert to Islam would be likely to remember acutely (Mingana does not translate this sentence).

فهذا يا بني عمي<sup>1</sup> قول مقبول وعذر غير مردود عند العباد المنقوصين<sup>2</sup> المتعنتين، فكيف<sup>3</sup> عند أرحم الراحمين، وأعدل الحاكمين، الذي لا يكلف نفساً إلا وسعها؟ فتبينوا—يهديكم الله—هذه | العبر<sup>4</sup> والأمثال، وباينوا الأهواء المردية، وارفعوا<sup>5</sup> 73r عن أبصار غشاواتها<sup>6</sup> وعن قلوب أكنّتها وأقفلها. واقتصروا من جميع<sup>7</sup> الأبواب التي كُتبت على باب النبوة فقط، أو على أخبار هؤلاء الأبرار من دعاة النبي عليه السلام،<sup>8</sup> أو على باب الغلبة الظاهرة التي كانت بإسم إله إبراهيم، أو على هذا الكتاب الناطق وماله من الفضائل التي قد بينتها من فوق، أو على تلك النبوات،<sup>9</sup> نبوة نبوة وخبراً وخبراً، وما شرحتُ من<sup>10</sup> معانيها وتأويلاتها. واقبلوا مني، فقد نخلتُ<sup>11</sup> لكم نصحي، واعلموا أنني لم أرد بما كتبتُ تفاخراً ولا تكاثراً، بل أردتُ<sup>12</sup> ما عند الله الذي لا يخيب راجيه، وما فيه من موافقة خليفته وعبد جعفر الإمام المتوكل على الله أمير المؤمنين، أيده الله.

وأملتُ بذلك من خيار المسلمين وكرامهم، وعقلاء أهل الذمة وأماثلهم، الشكر والمحبة، إذ كنتُ قد بينتُ لعوامهم ما استبنتُ، وكشفتُ لهم ما استبطنْتُ، وأفهمتهم ما فهمتُ، ونويتُ مشاركتهم في النور الذي أوتيتُ، والفوز الذي أملتُ، فخير ذلك وربحه لي ولهم إن كنتُ أصبتُ، ومكروهه عليّ دونهم إن كنتُ أخطأتُ فيما قلتُ. أسأل العصمة ودوام التغميدية، وأعوذ من أسباب الغفلة، وأرغب إليه في إقالة العثرة، ولباس الستر والسلامة والعاقبة لي بما أملتُ منه عاجلاً وآجلاً فيما ألفتُ وقلتُ.

<sup>1</sup>B omits: يا بني عمي <sup>2</sup>B: والمنقوصين <sup>3</sup>C and D: وكيف <sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and

D: الحجج <sup>5</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: وأزيغوا <sup>6</sup>C and D: غشاوتها <sup>7</sup>Reading with

B; illegible in A; C and D: بين <sup>8</sup>B: صلعم <sup>9</sup>B omits: تلك النبوات <sup>10</sup>B: بين <sup>11</sup>B: محصتُ

<sup>12</sup>Reading with B; A, C and D omit this word.

My cousins, these are acceptable words and an excuse that would not be rejected by humans who are imperfect and stubborn, so even less by the Most Compassionate of those who are compassionate and the Most Just of judges, who only burdens a soul with what it can bear. So consider, may God guide you, these | admonitions and examples, let go of rebellious ideas, and remove the veils from [your] eyes and the barriers and locks from [your] hearts. From all the points that have been written, confine yourselves to the point of prophethood alone, or to the reports of these pious preachers of the Prophet (peace be upon him), or to the point of the triumphant victory that took place in the name of the God of Abraham, or to this Book which speaks directly and the fine qualities within it which I have set out above, or to the prophecies, prophecy by prophecy, report by report, and their meanings and explanations I have presented. Accept from me, for I have sifted for you my advice, and realise that in what I have written I have not looked to be boastful or puffed up, but I have desired what is with God who does not fail the one who hopes in him, and to be in accord with his caliph and servant Ja'far the Imām al-Mutawakkil 'alā Llāh, the Commander of the Faithful (may God strengthen him).<sup>421</sup>

73r

In this I hope for thanks and affection from eminent and noble Muslims and reasonable and exemplary protected people, because I have shown their common people what I have tried to show, revealed to them the discussion I have made, let them understand what I understand, and have intended that they should share in the light that was brought to me and the success of what I hope for. The good of this and gain from it will be mine and theirs if I have succeeded, while the ignominy of it will be mine and not theirs if I have been mistaken in what I have said. I beg to be safeguarded and my shortcomings concealed in perpetuity, I seek protection for occasions of heedlessness, and I beg of him steadying against stumbling, and covering to shield me and give me safety, and for what I have written and said an outcome for myself in accordance with what I have hoped from him here and hereafter.

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421 'Alī's insistent expression of his hope to please both God and the caliph may be more than rhetoric. It suggests that al-Mutawakkil was closely interested in this writing—or at least 'Alī thought he was, and felt under an obligation to make known his intentions.

73v وقد تمّ في كتابي هذا الذي سمّيته كتاب الدين | والدولة فساد اليهوديّة وبطلانها، ومخازي الثنويّة والذهريّة وضلالاتها، ليتبين الناظر إنكسارها وانكسافها كلّها،<sup>2</sup> وأنّ النور الساطع والإيمان الهادي هو الإسلام وحده. والله المنّ<sup>3</sup> على ما هداني، ثمّ لعبده وخليفته، جعفر المتوكلّ على الله أمير المؤمنين أطال الله بقاءه على ما ندبني له، واجترّني وغيري من أهل الذمّة إليه، ترغيباً منه وترهيباً، واحتساباً وحبّاً منه للناس كافة. ولذلك صيرتُ الباب الأوّل من كتابي هذا في وصف ما بلغه فهمي<sup>4</sup> من مكارمه، وآثار نعمته، ورفق سياسته، ويمن دولته، وكثرة فتوحه، وما يجب على أهل الملّة والذمّة من حبه وطاعته وشكره. والسلام على من اتّبع الهدى، وألف التقوى، وأحبّ السلامة والصلاح<sup>5</sup> وحرّث<sup>6</sup> لهما وحضّ عليهما.<sup>7</sup>

تمّ الكتاب والله الحمد والمنّة، وذلك في بكرة يوم الجمعة الرابع من المحرمّ سنة ست عشرة وستمائة، أحسن الله مقدّمها. علّقه لنفسه العبد الفقير إلى رحمة الله تعالى وعفوه عبد الحميد بن الحسين بن بشيق، حامداً لله<sup>8</sup> تعالى على نعمه، ومصلّياً على سيّدنا محمد نبيّه وآله وصحبه ومسلماً عليهم<sup>9</sup> تسليماً كثيراً دائماً أبداً.

قلتُ وهذا الكتاب آخر ما علّق جمال الدين بعون الله لنفسه لأنّه مات بعد تعليقه بقليل.

<sup>1</sup>C and D: وضلاها <sup>2</sup>C and D omit this word. <sup>3</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: الشكر

<sup>4</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: شعرت أمّتي (wrongly). <sup>5</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: والصلاح <sup>6</sup>Reading with B; illegible in A; C and D: وحرّث <sup>7</sup>B adds here:

الله: <sup>8</sup>C and D: <sup>9</sup>C and D omit this word.

D omit this word.



In this book of mine, which I have named *The Book of Religion | and Empire*,<sup>73v</sup> the error and pointlessness of Judaism<sup>422</sup> and the infamies and errors of dualism and fatalism have been fully set out, so that the reader will see clearly that they have been totally abolished and darkened over, and that the luminous light and the guiding belief is Islam alone. Blessings to God for the way he has guided me, and to his servant and caliph Ja'far al-Mutawakkil 'alā Llāh, Commander of the Faithful (may God prolong his life), for what he has firmly brought me to, and has drawn me and others of the protected people to by his attracting and alarming, his esteeming and appreciating all people together. For this reason, I have made the first part of this book of mine into a description of what my understanding has attained from his excellent qualities, the effects of his graciousness, the friendliness of his government, the success of his empire, the abundance of his conquests and the duties incumbent upon the people of the faith and those who are under protection, obey him and thank him. Peace be upon those who follow guidance and know piety intimately, who love wholesomeness and righteousness and promote and advance them both.

The book is concluded. Praise and strength to God. This is in the morning of Friday, 4 Muḥarram, in the year 616, may God be pleased with its arrival. The one who wrote it down for himself is the servant in need of God's mercy and pardon, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Bashīq, who praises God almighty for his grace, and prays and asks for peace always for ever and eternally upon our master Muḥammad his Prophet, his family and his companions.

I have concluded, and this book was the last that Jamāl al-Dīn wrote down for himself with the help of God, because he died shortly after doing so.

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422 There is no substantial refutation of Judaism in the work. Either this is a mistake for 'Christianity', or the result of a memory lapse on 'Ali's part, or a reference to a part of the work that he intended to include but never did. See the similar reference on pp. 218–219 above.



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